

Speeches, statements, etc. of Maulana
Abul Kalam Azad appearing in The
Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta.

(From 13.12.39--8.7.46.)

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Wednes., Dec. 13, 1939

'A B S O L U T E L Y B A S E L E S S '

Mr. Jinnah's Charge Against
Congress Ministers

"MOUNTAIN OF FALSEHOOD"

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Call To The Muslims

"I have often declared before and I again do the same, with all possible sense of responsibility, that all these accusations against the Congress Ministries are absolutely baseless. It is a mountain of falsehood to say that the policy of the Congress Ministries was "decidedly anti-Muslim" and that they have been "trampling down the religious, political and economic rights of the Mussalman's," - says, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the course of a lengthy statement in reply to the recent utterances of Mr. Jinnah, with particular reference to his appeal for observance of a "day of deliverance and thanksgiving.

Throwing a challenge to Mr. Jinnah the Maulana Saheb says :-

"It is the duty of Mr. Jinnah or anyone who chooses to advance such allegations, to prove them by any method commonly prevailing in the world."

The statement runs as follows :-

For the last two years I have been persistently trying to get the mutual differences of the Congress and the Muslim League removed. In this endeavour I left no stone unturned. I firmly believe that in order to attain the National objective, all attempts of^{the} like nature should be persisted in with the fullest honesty of purpose and sincerity of action.

But I have to say with the deepest regret that whenever the Congress opens the door for negotiations and mutual understanding, another hand appears all of a sudden from the opposite direction, which wants to close it at the

crucial moment. This hand is that of none else than the President of the Muslim League - Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

I have said "wants to close," as the fact remains that in spite of this attempt to bang the door, it always remained open and is still open.

The last occasion which arose in this connection relates to the recent Delhi talks. It was made quite clear on behalf of the Congress in Delhi, that the Congress was prepared to begin the talks without any further delay, and both the sides might nominate their representatives. But Mr. Jinnah said that he could stay no longer in Delhi as he had to go to Bombay, and it would be better to postpone the talks to some future date. He promised to write from Bombay. This conversation took place in the first week of November. After the passing of a full month without a line from Mr. Jinnah, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself wrote to him on December 1. In reply to this letter. Mr. Jinnah wrote that he would stay in Bombay for two or three weeks and that he was ready to meet Pandit Nehru on whichever date the latter thought fit. This letter was written on December 4, and only after two days he issues an appeal to Mussalmans to observe the day of "deliverance and thanksgiving," causing suddenly a gloom over the atmosphere of all negotiation and agreement.

Mr. Jinnah says in another statement that it is a "sheer coincidence" that this statement appeared just at the time when the negotiations with the Congress were to begin, and that he had decided to do so when the Congress Ministries had announced their resignations. It matters little when this idea occurred to him first ; the question is whether it was not necessary for him at least to postpone it, owing to the pending negotiations with the Congress dropping out the propriety of the time chosen for the suggestion.

I think that the suggestion itself is such that nothing can be said in its defence from any point of view. In every respect, this is a suggestion which no Muslim having an iota of self-respecting consciousness of his political existence could ever give to his coreligionists.

Let us see what the suggestion means ? The Congress Ministries were working with full authority in eight provinces. There was nothing to hamper their stability and power. They had the full confidence of the Legislatures. The public opinion of the country was in their favour. The Viceroy and the Governors whole-heartedly wished that they should not resign. The Governors were ready to remove any obstruction which might have been caused by the War Ordinances. In fact, the attitude of non intervention of the Governors remained the same as it was before the war. Even the members of Muslim League Party were insisting that they should not resign. Furthermore it was the demand of the numerous constructive works that they should continue in office. Yet, the Congress did not for a moment glance towards power; it bowed its head to "Duty". It did not decide what its duty should be as a party in power, it did so only considering the interests of the country. It honestly felt that it could not remain in the seat of power when India, as well as all the subject peoples of the East, were denied their very right of freedom, for which the European war had broken out. In unequivocal terms it made its demand to the British Government, and when these were not fulfilled, it resigned unhesitatingly. And now, when it has given up the Government of the eight Provinces of its own choice and free will, what advice has the League President to offer to the Muslims of India ? It is this, that they should march towards the mosques and thank God on their deliverance from the Congress Ministries, which

have preferred Duty to Power, and have resigned not only on the issue of India's freedom, but for the rights of all the down trodden peoples of the East. It is difficult for me even to imagine, that ^{any} group of Muslims, however at loggerheads with the Congress, would tolerate to be presented to the world in such colours.

The Muslims have a full right to make whatever kind of struggle they deem fit in the cause of their rights and interests. But this is their internal dispute. They should under no circumstances, take any step which can possibly be used against the freedom of India. The present attitude of Mr. Jinnah is leading them towards this unfortunate position. It clearly means that the Muslims are being made a stumbling block in the path of India's freedom. I warned the Muslims in 1912 against this. It wounds my heart to the core that the need of reiterating the same has again arisen after 27 years.

And again, after all, why is Mr. Jinnah advising the Mussulmans to celebrate the day of "deliverance"? Because they have been saved from all the "atrocities of the Congress Ministries." What was the quantity and quality of the aforesaid "atrocities"? In the words of Mr. Jinnah "The Congress Ministries were actuated by a decidedly anti-Muslim policy and the Congress Ministries both in the discharge of the duties of the administration and in the legislatures have done their best to flout Muslim opinion, to destroy Muslim culture, and interfered with their religious and social life, and trampled their economic and political rights." Now, if we admit for the time being that the picture which Mr. Jinnah has presented is correct, let us consider what conclusion can be derived from it ? The conclusion is patently obvious. The Governments of eight provinces have been decidedly anti-Muslim. They have been

interfering in the religious and social life of Mussalmans.

They continued to destroy their culture. They trampled down their economic and political rights, and all this havoc was caused not only for a few days; it continued without a break for two-and-a-half years. What action then did the eighty millions of Muslims of India take under such impossible circumstances ? Only this, that they waited for thirty long months in the hope of the resignations of the Congress Ministries by their own choice and free will. And when this dream of theirs came true, they began to pour their hearts out to the Almighty in a spirit of thanksgiving, and after all their day of deliverance has come. What an honourable picture of the Muslims of India Mr. Jinnah wants to paint before the world ?

It is impossible for me as a Muslim to tolerate for a moment such a degrading picture. I absolutely refuse to believe that the Eighty Million Muslims of India can be inert and helpless to such an extent that in spite of the fact that the eight Governments of their country continued for two and ^a half years to interfere with their religion, destroy their culture trample down their economic and political rights, they only meekly waited for the dawn of the "Day of deliverance". This is a direct insult to the sense of self-respect of the Muslims of India. It is administering poison to them in place of nectar. The days have long gone when it was possible for men to tolerate such tyrannical Governments. Now-a-days it is impossible for any Provincial Government to carry on the administration even for a short time after practising the tyrannies depicted by Mr. Jinnah. He says that every Congress Ministry did the same without any exception. I affirm that even if a single Ministry had adopted this attitude, the Muslims of India have certainly so much sense of their existence that they would not have waited for any suggestion of Mr. Jinnah

to celebrate a day of deliverance. They would have narrowed down the life of such a ministry within a short time. The stuff of the Muslims of India is not formed of elements containing insensibility and cowardice. They cannot bear to witness with equanimity "Interference in their social and religious life" and "Trampling down of their economic and political rights" continually for two and half years."

The story of the so-called "tyrannies" of the Congress ministries is not a new one. During the last two years they have been replied to many a time and proposals for a final decision have often been put forward. But Mr. Jinnah and his compatriots have always avoided it. It should be kept in view in this connection that the accusation of Mr. Jinnah is not that the Congress Ministries have not done sufficiently what they should have done to better the communal atmosphere, or that in some particular cases the Mussulmans of a certain Province have to complain or that a Ministry committed certain mistakes in administrative matters. If such were the nature of the accusations they might not have been considered unreasonable, whether they proved to be false or true after due inquiry. But Mr. Jinnah is not a man who would like to climb only to the intermediate steps of a ladder. His charge definitely is that "the policy of the Congress Ministries was decidedly anti-Muslim." They continued to "destroy" Muslim culture, they constantly "interfered in the religious and social life" and always "trampled down the political and economic rights of the Mussulmans."

I have often declared before and I again do the same, with all possible sense of responsibility, that all these accusations against the Congress Ministries are absolutely baseless. It is a mountain of falsehood to say that the policy of the Congress Ministries was "decidedly

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anti-Muslim," and that they have been "trampling down the religious, political and economic rights of the Mussalmans."

It is the duty of Mr. Jinnah, or anyone who chooses to advance such allegations, to prove them by any method commonly prevailing in the world. And if he is unable to do so, every sensible man would expect him at least to keep restraint on his language and pen.

It is not the occasion to describe my personal attitude towards the complaints of Mussulmans which came to my knowledge during the last two years of the working of the Congress Ministries. I shall do so on some future occasion in detail. However, I may briefly say, that during all this period no complaint which came to my knowledge, went without being critically inquired into. All my colleagues of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee, the members of the A.I.C.C., the Ministers of the Provinces and the office-bearers of the P.C.C.'s know to what degree my attitude has remained strict and uncompromising in these matters. I was not satisfied with the replies of the Ministers only, and it was not uncommon for me to go through the files of such affairs personally, and strictly to examine them on every point.

In this connection I only wish to say that if even a fraction of the allegations of Mr. Jinnah were correct I am not a man who would have allowed the Congress Ministries to remain in their seats even for 24 hours.

If Mr. Jinnah and his colleagues think that they are saying these things to benefit the cause of the Muslims, I would tell them in all earnestness that they are going quite opposite way; and they will do a true service to the Muslims of India if they change their direction as early as possible, a true service-for which the Indian Muslims are in greater need to-day." — (A.P.)

Thursday, Dec. 14, 1939

NO CONGRESS COALITION IN ASSAM

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a press statement on the situation in Assam says :-

I had given Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi the trouble to come to Calcutta, in order that I may have a talk with him on the Assam affairs. He came here and returned after meeting me. I have given necessary directions about certain matters to the Congress Assembly Party. In this connection I wish to make one thing clear. Since the resignation of the Congress Ministry some circles in Assam are speculating on the possibility of another Ministry, with the support of the Congress Party, which may assure to carry on the constructive programme of the Congress. I want to clear this matter on behalf of the Parliamentary Sub-committee.

The Ministry of Assam has resigned just like the other Congress Ministries. And now, the Assam Assembly Congress Party has nothing to do with the question of the formation or giving help to another Ministry. All speculations in this respect are entirely baseless, and no importance should be attached to them.

In to-day's local papers I find a news that I am going to present the case of Assam at the next meeting of the Working Committee. I do not know from where this news started, it has no reality behind it. So far as Assam is concerned, no new situation has arisen which might necessitate its presentation to the next meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

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Friday, Jan 5, 1940.

'QUAKE SUFFERERS IN TURKEY

NEED FOR RELIEF

Maulana Azad's Appeal For Funds

An appeal for funds in connection with the relief of earthquake sufferers in Turkey is made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a statement to the press. Maulana Azad says:-

"Horrible details of the havoc wrought by earthquake in western Anatolia have been received by me through a telegram sent by the Red Crescent Society of Istanbul. It says : "The situation is further aggravated by the floods. The whole of the district of Brusa is nearly destroyed. Hundreds of half-frozen women and children are being snatched away from the jaws of death and are being brought to temporary camps from the hill tops. The temperature has gone down 30 degrees below freezing point. Consequently thousands of homeless people are at the mercy of cruel weather and the flood. Similar conditions are obtaining in the area of Izmir Smyrna. Such a destruction by an earthquake is not remembered in the history of Turkey for the last 200 years. More than one hundred thousand people are involved in it and are in dire distress."

"The message ends with the words :-

"It is hoped that the traditional generosity of India would stretch its help to these unfortunate sufferers."

APPEAL FOR FUNDS

I would appeal to all those generous people of India, whose hearts are touched with the calamities of humanity at large, irrespective of nationality and country to do whatever is possible for these unhappy men without delay. My hopes are specially centred round the Rulers of the Indian States and the merchants of the big cities. They have always been in the front rank in these matters and their bounties have won them the distinction of being called "traditionally generous". I am sure the traditional

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generosity of His Exalted Highness the Nizam will again come to the fore as usual, in the wake of its magnanimous past.

It has given me the greatest pleasure to find that Hon. Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan has already opened a relief fund at Lahore. Another fund is being collected at Calcutta, the treasurer of which is Sir Adamji Haji Dawood. I would advise the donors to send their donations to the above funds. Big amounts can easily be sent direct to Turkey through bank. In any case all the sums should be sent direct to the President, Turkish Republic, Ankara."

turday, Jan. 27, 1940

GREAT STRUGGLE AHEAD

FRIDAY'S DEMONSTRATION

Independence Day Observance In Calcutta

RALLIES AT PUBLIC PARKS

Hoisting Of Tricolour : Maulana Azad On Significance
Of Independence Pledge

UNITY : NEED OF THE HOUR

"Independence is the birth-right of every Indian as it is the birth-right of every individual. If any Government stands in the way of achievement of that freedom the people have every right to change the Government and, if necessary, to end it."

In these words Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressed the huge gathering which, assembling on Friday afternoon at Mohammed Ali Park, pledged themselves to independence.

The Independence pledge, as recommended by the Congress Working Committee, was read and accepted at the meeting.

The assemblage swelled as procession after procession, organised by different organisations in the city and environs arrived at the Park.

Prolonged shouts of "Bande-Mataram" marked the arrival of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad a few minutes after the proceedings commenced.

MOMENTOUS OCCASION

To-day, on this momentous occasion, observed Maulana Azad, patriotic Indians in millions, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, would take the pledge of the independence. In the words which they would be uttering they would express their thirst for freedom.

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But, Maulana Azad warned the audience, the country needed deeds and not empty words. Let them try to realise the significance of the pledge, earnestly and seriously, before they committed themselves to it. Only when they cherished an abiding faith in the promise and were determined to carry it out they were entitled to accept the pledge. That would be the best thing they would be doing for the Motherland.

They must have by this time seen the pledge; certain changes had been made therein. Maulana Sahib would repeat his request to carefully go through the promise before they took it. They should not accept the pledge simply because they had attended the function. Although the Congress Working Committee expected every Indian to subscribe to the pledge they had made it abundantly clear that anybody who was not inclined to accept it in full should leave the portion they might object to. The Congress did not want any false promise; they did not want any self-deception.

Those who were unable to take the entire pledge, as recommended by the Working Committee, had been requested to send in their note of dissent to their respective District Congress Committee who would send those to the centre. By this process the Congress would appraise the measure of popular support on the strength of which they would like to proceed. For, they did not like to build castles in the air.

Those who would be accepting the pledge in its entirety should accept it in all seriousness. It was no show or "tamasha" they were attending that evening. If they took the promise they must endeavour their level best to carry it into effect. They were shouldering a serious responsibility and upon their work would depend the achievement of country's freedom.

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Indians must carry on the struggle with truth and non-violence. Before God and man they were taking a promise to which they must cling to the last breath. They must regard every human being as their brother and treat him irrespective of his caste or creed on a footing of absolute equality. The purpose of the pledge would be set at nought if they continued to think in terms of high or low.

Untouchability, according to Maulana Azad, was nothing but a mental aberration which could be removed by pure thoughts alone. Outward observances by themselves could not bring about purity of mind. By helping to remove untouchability in all its forms they should be purifying themselves and helping in the furtherance of the sacred cause they had espoused.

nday, Feb. 19, 1940

NEW STRUGGLE AHEAD

Present State Of Suspense Cannot Continue

MOULANA AZAD INTERVIEWED

"Struggle For Independence Cannot Await Settlement
Of Internal Problems"

LAHORE, Feb. 18.

"THE present state of suspense cannot continue and I can say that after the Ramgarh session the Congress must take a step forward which would surely take the form of a new struggle," declared Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the course of his first interview with journalists after his election as President of the Indian National Congress.

Maulana Sahib said that he regarded his election as a vote of confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the country's approval of his programme.

HINDU-MOSLEM PROBLEM

Asked if the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem would form the chief plank in his programme during year, Maulana Azad said that the real issue before the country was political but they could not ignore the Hindu-Muslim problem.

He had, however, no hesitation in saying that the struggle for the achievement of Independence could not await the settlement of internal problems.

He wanted to make it clear that the settlement of the political issue was not dependent on the solution of the communal problem which was, after all, a domestic affair.

CANNOT WAIT ANY LONGER

The Congress had taken a definite step and could not wait any longer. "The present state of suspense," added Maulana Azad, "cannot continue longer and I can say that after the Ramgarh session the Congress must take a

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step forward. That step would surely take the form of a new struggle."

Replying to a question whether it would mean the launching of civil disobedience once again, Maulana Sahib said : "Yes, naturally."

APPEAL TO MUSLIM BRETHREN

Referring to the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem Maulana Sahib made it clear that the Congress had never closed its doors and would always be prepared to enter into negotiations provided a suitable atmosphere was created and proper men came in to negotiate. Maulana Sahib also indicated the possibility of examining the question of forming coalition ministries in the provinces provided a satisfactory solution of the political question could be arrived at with the British Government.

Explaining the circumstances in which he agreed to shoulder the responsibility of his high office, Maulana Sahib said that his colleagues had been pressing him to accept the Presidentship of the Congress for the last two years but he would not accede to their wishes as the Congress engaged in its parliamentary activities and ^a kind of normal life prevailed in the country. Though all the grounds for non-acceptance of this honour which existed at that time were also to be found now yet the declaration of the European war in September last now altered the situation and the Congress had to throw away the burden of provincial administration in order to enter a decisive struggle.

He continued : "I had zealously worked to bring about this situation and I felt the full weight of its responsibility. I thought over it dispassionately and concluded that I could not ^{shirk} ~~shirk~~ the responsibility this year. The nation was face to face with a delicate and critical

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situation and when my colleagues had confidence that my humble would be of some use at this juncture, I deemed it to be my duty not to hesitate to shoulder the responsibility. My sincerest thanks are due to all my colleagues and friends who have reposed their confidence in me at this momentous occasion. I am sure they will help and co-operate with me with as great a zeal as they have shown their confidence in me."

Maulana Sahib said it was to a certain extent essential for launching a civil disobedience campaign that a favourable atmosphere should prevail in the country but he did not think that there was much danger of communal disturbances.

Commenting on Mr. Jinnah's recent statement to the "Time and Tide", Maulana Azad said that Mr. Jinnah's two nation theory was entirely based on misunderstanding and he did not agree with him.

Maulana Azad expressed himself in favour of giving representation to socialists and other groups in the Congress on the Working Committee of the A.I.C.C. but declined to be drawn into further discussion on the subject.

Referring to his meeting yesterday with the Punjab Premier Maulana Azad said that though it was a purely personal visit yet it was natural that as politicians they should discuss the situation in the country.

COALITION MINISTRIES

Maulana Azad said that the possibility of forming coalition ministries in the provinces was not precluded if the British Government acceded to their political demand but hastened to add that there could be no question of the Congress taking up office under the Government of India Act of 1935.

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Referring to social relations of Congressmen with non-Congress Ministers, Maulana Sahib said that the Congress had never banned social relations.

When his attention was drawn to arrests of Ahrars and Congressmen in the Punjab under the Defence of India Act, he said that Congressmen might have to go to jails in the near future.

It is understood that Maulana Azad is issuing a statement shortly on the Sind affairs in view of the misunderstanding created by the attitude of the Congress Party in Sind.

MUSLIMS AND SAFEGUARDS

"The Muslims have every right to struggle for their safeguards. They should not look to the British Government for these safeguards but they should look to their countrymen", declared Maulana Azad, addressing the first public meeting since his election as President of the Indian National Congress.

It was one of the biggest meetings held in Lahore in recent times and was attended by a very large number of Muslims. The Maulana received a great ovation on arrival. He was presented with a guard of honour by Ahrar and Congress volunteers.

Explaining his mission to the Punjab Maulana Azad said that for some time past there had been differences among Congressmen in the Punjab which were hindering the progress of the Congress work in the province. With a view to bringing unity among the different groups he had come to the Punjab. During his stay in Lahore he met leaders of various groups and parties in the Congress and he was glad to announce that he had a good response from them. He hoped that the agreement arrived at between the rival groups would not be shortlived.

Monday, Feb. 19, 1940.

Dealing with the communal question, Maulana Azad said that nobody could deny its existence. Everybody was anxious to solve this question as early as possible. It was rather the bounden duty of every Indian to help in solving the thorny issue. But so far as the question of Independence was concerned he would appeal to his countrymen to join hands in achieving the freedom of their country.

The Muslims had every right to press for their safeguards. They should not look to the British for their safeguards but they should look to their own countrymen. The foremost problem at this juncture was to achieve independence, other questions could be solved later on.

Proceeding, Maulana Azad said that if they asked the British for their safeguards they would be strengthening the roots of British Imperialism in India. He would advise his nine crore Muslim brethren that they should not look upon their countrymen with suspicion. Their rights were not at all in danger in the hands of the Congress. There was no other alternative for the Muslims than to join in the struggle for the freedom of the country. The doors of the Congress were open to all and it represented all communities. They should dispel all suspicions and muster strong under the banner of the Congress.

Concluding Maulana Azad said that the doors of the Congress would remain open for those who would come straight but not for those who would come by indirect ways. — (A.P.).

urday, March 9, 1940

D E M O C R A T I C I N D E P E N D E N C E

INDIA'S GOAL

Maulana Azad's Message To " News Chronicle "

ALLAHABAD, Mar. 8.

The A.I.C.C. Office has released to the Press the following message sent to the "News Chronicle," London in response to their request by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, President-elect of the Ramgarh session of the Congress :-

"We believe that the world will appreciate our position and not blame us for our decision. We have vigilantly kept control on our heads and hearts lest we might take a hasty step at a critical juncture. We waited and waited patiently but certainly we cannot wait indefinitely. India was prepared to throw her weight on the side of freedom but the British Government has banged the door in her face.

"If any people outside India entertain the opinion that Indian Muslims are opposed to independence, I would tell them with the fullest sense of responsibility that this is absolutely a false impression. Not a single responsible Muslim group is opposed to it. The general trend of Muslim thought in India has compelled even the Muslim League to change its creed of 'Full responsible Government' to that of 'democratic independence.'" - (United Press).

Saturday, Mar. 16, 1940

M A H A T M A G A N D H I ' S L E A D E R S H I P

PLEA FOR CONFIDENCE

Maulana Azad's Appeal For United Stand

Ramgarh, Mar. 15

A clarion call to the country to have full confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi is made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, President-elect of the fifty-third session of the Indian National Congress, in the course of a message to the Congress "Souvenir" published by the Reception Committee of the Ramgarh Congress.

"Mahatma Gandhi", the Maulana says, "is the only leadership which has built up a magnificent past of our movement and through it alone can we expect to achieve a victorious future." He adds : "We are passing through a most critical decisive period of the political struggle of India. I would appeal to each and every Congressman and Congress woman to keep two vital things in view without which it would not be possible for us to come out of the ordeal of our time successfully. Whatever the developments might be, we can only face them with dignity and strength if our organisation is well-prepared and has put an end to the internal controversy and conflict. No lover of the Congress and of Indian freedom may do anything which impairs our unity and joint will for action. We have all to rise above our petty selves and become in this crisis of our destiny true soldiers of India speaking and acting together with dignity and forbearance and in accordance with ideals and principles we have cherished." (A.F.)

nes, March 20, 1940

CALL FOR FULL CONFIDENCE IN GANDHIJI'S LEADERSHIP

RIGHT OF SELF DETERMINATION

FIRM CONGRESS STAND

Maulana Azad's Presidential Address At Ramgarh

NO HELP TO BRITISH IMPERIALISM

Congress Viewpoint On Minorities Question : Two
Basic Principles Enunciated
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MAZHARPURI, Mar. 19

The following is the authorised English translation of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Presidential address at the 53rd session of the Indian National Congress :-

In 1923 you elected me President of this National Assembly. For the second time, after seventeen years, you have once again conferred upon me the same honour. Seventeen years is not a long period in the history of national struggles. But now the pace of events and world change is so rapid that our old standards no longer apply. During these last seventeen years we have passed through many stages, one after another. We had a long journey before us and it was inevitable that we should pass through several stages. We rested at many a point no doubt, but never stopped. We surveyed and examined every prospect but we were not ensnared by it and passed on. We faced many ups and downs but always our faces were turned towards the goal. The world may have doubted our intentions and determination but we never had a moment's doubt. Our path was full of difficulties and at every step we were faced with great obstacles. It may be that we did not proceed as rapidly as we desired but we did not flinch from marching forward. If we look back upon the period between 1923 and 1940, nineteen-twenty-three will appear to us a faded landmark in the distance. In 1923 we desired to reach our goal but the goal was so distant then that even the

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milestones were hidden from our eyes. Raise your eyes to-day and look ahead. Not only do you see the milestones clearly but the goal itself is not distant. But this is evident that the nearer we get to the goal the more intense does our struggle become. Although the rapid march of events has taken us farther from our old landmark and brought us nearer our goal, yet it has created new troubles and difficulties for us. To-day our caravan is passing a very critical stage. The essential difficulty of such a critical period lies in its conflicting possibilities. It is very probable that a correct step may bring us very near our goal, and on the other hand, a false step may land us in fresh troubles and difficulties.

At such a critical juncture you have elected me President and thus demonstrated the great confidence you have in one of your co-workers. It is a great honour and a great responsibility. I am grateful for the honour and crave your support in shouldering the responsibility. I am confident that the fullness of your confidence in me will be a measure of the fullness of the support that I shall continue to receive.

THE PROBLEM OF THE DAY

I think that I should now come straight to the real problem before us without further delay.

The first and the most important question before us is this : Whether is the step taken by us in consequence of the declaration of War on the 3rd September, 1939, leading us ? And where do we stand now ?

Probably in the history of the Congress, the 1936 session at Lucknow marked a new ideological phase, when the Congress passed a long resolution on the international situation and placed its viewpoint clearly and categorically before the public. After this a consideration of the international situation, and a resolution thereon, became an essential and integral part of the

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annual declarations of the Congress. Thus this decision on this subject was arrived at and placed before the world with full deliberation. These resolutions embodied at one and the same time, two declarations to the world : Firstly, we stated, what I have described as a new ideology in Indian politics, that we could not remain in isolation from the political events of the outside world, even in our present state of helplessness. It was essential that while we forged our way ahead and fashioned our future, we must not confine ourselves merely to our own surroundings but should keep a vigilant watch on the conditions of the outside world. Innumerable changes in the world have brought countries and nations nearer to one another; so that the waves of thought and action, rising in one corner of the world, flow and produce immediately reactions in other places. It is, therefore, impossible to-day for India to consider her problems while confining herself within her own four walls. It is inevitable that events in the outside world should have their repercussions in India; it is equally inevitable that our decisions and the conditions prevailing in India should affect the rest of the world. It was this consciousness and belief which brought about our decisions. We declared by these resolutions against reactionary movements like Fascism and Nazism which were directed against democracy and individual and national freedom. These movements were gaining strength day by day and India regarded this as the greatest danger to world progress and peace. India's head and heart were with those peoples who were standing up for democracy and freedom and resisting this wave of reaction.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

But while we were considering the dangers arising from Fascism and Nazism it was impossible for us to forget

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the older danger which has been proved to be infinitely more fatal to the peace and freedom of nations than these new dangers, and which has in fact supplied the basis for this reaction. I refer to British Imperialism. We are not distant spectators of this imperialism, as we are of the new reactionary movements. It has taken possession of our house and dominates over us. It was for this reason that we stated in clear terms that if new entanglements in Europe brought about war, India, which has been debarred from exercising her will and making free decisions, will not take any part in it. She could only consider this question when she had acquired the right of coming to decision according to her own free will and choice.

India cannot endure the prospect of Nazism and Fascism, but she is even more ^{tired} ~~tried~~ of British imperialism. If India remains deprived of her natural right to freedom, this would clearly mean that British imperialism continued to flourish with all its traditional characteristics, and under such conditions, India would on no account be prepared to lend a helping hand for the triumph of British imperialism. This was the second declaration which was constantly emphasized through these resolutions. These resolutions were repeatedly passed from the Lucknow session onwards till August 1939 and are known by the name of "War Resolutions."

All these declarations of the Congress were before the British Government when suddenly, in the third week of August 1939, the war clouds gathered and thundered and, at the beginning of September, war began.

CONDITIONS BEFORE WAR

At this stage I will ask you to pause for a moment and look back. What were the conditions prevailing in August last ?

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The Government of India Act of 1935 was imposed^{and} upon India forcibly by the British Government/as usual, resorting to the old stratagem, it tried to make the world believe that it had conferred a big instalment of India's national right upon her. The world knows the decision of the Congress to reject this Act. Nevertheless the Congress decided to avoid a conflict at that stage and preferred a respite. It resolved to take charge of Provincial Governments on a certain definite condition. After this decision the Congress Ministries were functioning successfully in eight out of the eleven Provinces, and it was in the interest of Great Britain herself to maintain this state of affairs for as long a period as possible. There was yet another factor. So far as the War was concerned, India had clearly condemned Nazi Germany. Her sympathies were with the democratic nations, and this was a point in Britain's favour. Under such circumstances, it was natural to expect that if the British Government had changed its old imperialistic mentality in the slightest degree, it would, even though as a measure of expediency, change its old methods at this juncture and afford an opportunity to India to feel that she was breathing in a changed atmosphere. But we all know how the British Government behave in this matter. There was not even a shadow of change discernible in its methods. Its policy was dictated exactly in accordance with the habits of an imperialism a hundred and fifty years old. It decided its course of action and, without India being afforded in any manner and in the slightest degree an opportunity to declare freely her opinion, her participation in the War was announced. It was not even considered necessary to give those representative assemblies, imposed upon us by British diplomacy for purposes of show, an opportunity, of expressing their opinion.

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FORCED INTO WAR

The whole world knows, and so do we, how all the Empire countries were given freedom of decision; the representatives assemblies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, all of them arrived at an independent decision, in regard to their participation in the War, without the least outside interference. Not only this but when Ireland decided to remain neutral, no surprise was shown nor was a single voice raised against it in Great Britain. Mr. De Valera, in the very shadow of England, refused to extend his help to Britain in the War unless the question of Ulster was settled to his satisfaction.

But what place did India occupy in this picture of the British Commonwealth? India is being told-to-day that the generous hand of Britain will confer upon her the precious gift of Dominion Status in the near but unknown future. When the War began, a war which will probably be one of the greatest in the world, India was pushed into it suddenly without her even realising that she was entering it. This fact alone was sufficient to show us which ^{way} was the wind was blowing. But there was no need for us to hurry. Other opportunities were to come and the time was not distant when we could see the face of British imperialism even more unmasked and at closer quarters.

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

When in 1914 the first spark was ignited in a corner of the Balkans, England and France raised the cry of the rights of small nations. Later, President Wilson's fourteen points came into view; their fate is well-known to the world. On that occasion the situation was different. After the last war, England and France, intoxicated with victory, adopted a course of action which necessarily

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resulted in a reaction. This reaction grew. It took the shape of Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany, and unrestrained dictatorships, based on brute force, challenged the peace and freedom of the world. When this happened, inevitably the world aligned itself in two rival camps: one supporting democracy and freedom; the other encouraging the forces of reaction. And in this way a new picture of the coming war began to take shape. Mr. Chamberlain's Government, to which the existence of Soviet Russia was much more unbearable than the existence of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and which considered Russia to be a living challenge to British imperialism, continued to ^{watch} ~~which~~ this situation for three years. Not only this, but by its attitude it clearly and repeatedly encouraged Fascist and Nazi ambitions. Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Albania, disappeared as free countries, one after the other, from the map of the world. And Great Britain, by her vacillating policy, continually assisted in the destruction of their freedom. But when this course of action produced its natural and ultimate result and Nazi Germany marched ahead unchecked, the British Government found itself compelled to enter the arena of war. Had it not done so then, the power of Germany would have become an intolerable menace to British imperialism. Now the new slogans of freedom, world peace, democracy, took the place of the old cry of saving the smaller nations, and the whole world began to ring with these cries. The declaration of war on the 3rd September by Britain and France was made to the accompaniment of the resounding echoes of these slogans. The peoples of the world were bewildered and harassed by the brutal trial of strength and the worldwide unrest created by these new reactionary forces, and they lent a willing ear to the siren voices of these slogans.

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THE CONGRESS DEMAND

War was declared on the 3rd September and on the 7th September the All-India Congress Working Committee met at Wardha to deliberate upon the situation. What did the Working Committee do on this occasion ? All the declarations of the Congress made since 1936 were before it. It had also to face the action taken by the British Government in declaring India as a belligerent country. Undoubtedly the Congress could not have been blamed had it come to a final decision in accordance with the logic of the situation. But it continued to keep vigilant watch on its mind and heart; it resisted the natural urge of the moment for an acceleration of pace; it deliberated upon every aspect of the matter, unemotionally and dispassionately, and took the step which to-day entitles India to raise her head and say to the world that this was the only correct step which could have been then taken. The Congress postponed its final decisions and asked the British Government to state its war aims, for on this depended not only peace and justice for India, but for the whole world. If India was being invited to participate in this war, she had a right to know why this war was being fought. What was its object ? If the result of this grim tragedy was not to be the same as that of the last war, and if it was really being fought to safeguard Freedom, Democracy and Peace and to bring a new order to the world then, in all conscience, India had a right to know, what would be the effect of these aims on her own destiny.

The Working Committee formulated this demand in a long statement which was published on the 14th September, 1939. If I express the hope that this statement will occupy an outstanding place in recent Indian history, I am sure I am not ~~claiming~~ too much of the future historian.

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This is a simple but irrefutable document, based on truth and reason, and it can only be set aside by the arrogant pride of armed force. Though this cry was raised in India, in fact it was not of India only, but it was the agonised cry of wronged humanity, whose hopes had so often before been betrayed. Twenty-five years ago the world was plunged into one of the biggest infernos of death and destruction known to history, and yet this was but a preparation for a still bigger catastrophe. The world was bewitched and its hopes were kindled by cries of freedom for small nations, collective security, self-determination, disarmament, League of Nations and international arbitration, and of similar high sounding phrases. But what was the result in the end ? Every cry proved false; every vision that seemed so real to us, vanished as a dream. Again nations are being plunged into the blood and fire of war. Should we part with reason and reality so completely as not even to ask why this is being done and how this affects our destiny before plunging into this deluge of death and destruction ?

BRITISH GOVT.'S ANSWER

In answer to this demand of the Congress a regular series of statements were made on behalf of the British Government, both in England and in India. The first link of the series was the Delhi declaration of the Viceroy, dated the 17th October. This lengthy statement is perhaps a finished example of that peculiarly involved and tiring style which characterises the official literature of the Government of India. After reading page after page of this statement, the curtain is at last lifted with hesitation. We have a glimpse. We are told then that if we want to know the war aims we must read a speech by the Prime Minister of Britain, and this speech deals only with

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the peace of Europe and with the adjustment of international relations. Even the words "Freedom" and "Democracy" are not to be found in the Viceroy's statement. So far as India is concerned, it only reaffirms^m the policy laid down in the preamble of the 1919 Act, which is now embodied in the 1935 Act. To-day that policy continues to be the same; there is nothing to add to it or to improve it.

FIRST STEP OF CONGRESS

On the 17th of October, 1939, the statement of the Viceroy was published and the Working Committee met to deliberate upon it on the 22nd October at Wardha. Without any discussion it came to the conclusion that this reply could under no circumstances be considered satisfactory, and that it should now unhesitatingly give the decision, which it had postponed till then. The decision of the Working Committee was as follows :

"In the circumstances, the Committee cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialistic policy which the Congress has always sought to end. As a first step in this direction, the Committee call upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations."

As a result of this decision the Congress Ministries in eight Provinces resigned.

This was but the first step which the Congress took in the series of events. Now we have to see to what these events led. The communique of the Viceroy issued on the 5th February from Delhi giving the resume of the talk between him and Mahatma Gandhi, and Mahatma Gandhi's statement of the 6th February may be regarded as the last of this series. We all know the substance of the Viceroy's statement. The British Government, it is stated, fully desires that India should, in the shortest time possible

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under the circumstances, attain the status of a British dominion, and that the transition period should be as short as possible. But it is unwilling to concede to India the right of framing her own constitution and deciding her own destiny through her own elected representatives without outside interference. In other words, the British Government does not accept the position that India has got the right of self-determination.

IMPERIALISM UNMASKED

At the first touch of reality the structure of make-belief fell to pieces. For the last four years the world resounded with cries of democracy and freedom. The utterances of the most responsible spokesmen of England and France in this regard are so fresh in our memory as not to need recall. But the moment India raised this question, the reality behind these utterances was unveiled. Now we are told that, without doubt, safeguarding the freedom of nations is the aim of this war but that this is confined within the geographical limits of Europe. The peoples of Asia and Africa should not dare to have any such hopes. Mr. Chamberlain has made this even more clear in his Birmingham speech of the 24th February, though we never had any doubts about the matter. He confirmed the British Government's action by his words. Proclaiming British war aims, he stated that they were fighting to secure that small nations in Europe shall henceforth live in security, free from the constant threat of aggression against their independence.

Though this answer about war aims has been given through a British spokesman, yet in ^{reality} ~~really~~ it interprets the real ^{mentality} ~~mentally~~ of Europe as a whole which has been known to the world for the last two hundred years. In

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the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries whatever principles were accepted for individual and collective human freedom, the right to claim them and to benefit from them was limited to European nations. And even amongst them, its application was confined to the Christian nations of Europe~~X~~. To-day, in the middle of the twentieth century, the world has so changed that the thoughts and actions of the last century read like ancient history, and appear to us as faded landmarks in the distance. But we will have to admit that there is at least one distinctive landmark of Europe emphasizing human rights which have not faded and is still with us. We have not passed it yet, or achieved those rights.

NO CHANGE IN OUTLOOK

This reality has been brought home to us again by the problem of our own political and national rights in India. When, after the declaration of war, we raised the question of war aims and their effect on India's destiny, we were not forgetful of British policy in 1917, & 1919. We wanted to know how in the year 1939, when the world was covering the track of centuries in the course of days, England looked at India. Had that look changed? We were given a clear reply that it had not; even now there was no change in that imperialist outlook. We are told to believe that the British Government is very desirous that India should attain the status of a dominion, in the shortest possible period. We knew even before that the British Government had expressed this desire. Now we know that they are very anxious indeed.

But it is not a question of the desire or of the measure of the desire of the British Government. The straight and simple question is of India's right; whether she is entitled to determine her own fate or not. On the answer to this question depend the answers to all other questions of the day. This question forms the foundation stone of the Indian problem; India will not allow it to be

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removed, for if it is displaced, the whole structure of Indian nationalism will collapse.

So far as the question of war is concerned our position is quite clear. We see the face of British imperialism as clearly now as we did in the last war, and we are not prepared to assist in its triumph by ~~partici~~-pating in the War. Our case is crystal clear. We do not wish to see British imperialism triumphant and stronger and thus lengthen the period of our own subjection to it. We absolutely refuse to do so. Our way lies patently in the opposite direction.

WHERE WE STAND

Let us return to our starting point and consider once again whither the step that we took after the ~~de~~clara-tion of war on the 3rd September is leading us. Where do we stand to-day ? The answer to both these questions is by this time apparent to your minds and is hovering on your lips. It is not even necessary that your lips should tell me for I feel the quivering of your hearts. The step of temporary and partial cooperation which we took in 1937, we withdrew after the declaration of War. Inevitably we inclined towards further steps in non-co-operation. As we stand to-day, we have to decide whether we should ~~march~~ forward in this direction or go backward. When once a step is taken, there is no stopping. To cry ^{halt} ~~halt~~, is to go back, and we refuse to go back. We can only, therefore, go forward. I am sure that the voice of every one of you joins mine when I proclaim that we must and will go forward.

MUTUAL SETTLEMENT

In this connection one question naturally faces us. It is the verdict of history that in a struggle between nations, no power forgoes its possessions unless compelled ~~to~~ to do so.

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Principles of reason and morality have affected the conduct of individuals but have not affected the selfish conduct of Powers that dominate. To-day even in the middle of the twentieth century, we witness how the new reactionary forces in Europe have shattered man's faith in individual and collective human rights. In place of justice and reason, brute force has become ~~and~~ ^{the} sole argument in the determination of rights. But while the world is presenting this depressing picture, there is another side, the hopeful side, which cannot be ignored. We see countless millions all over the world, without any distinction, awakening to a new consciousness which is spreading everywhere with great rapidity. This new consciousness is tired of the utter hopelessness of the old order, and is impatient for a new order based on reason, **justice** and peace. This new awakening which arose after the last War and took root in the deepest recesses of the human soul, has now come to dominate men's minds and their utterances. Perhaps there is no parallel in history to the ~~speech~~ ^{speech} of this awakening.

In these circumstances was it beyond the realm of possibility that history should, contrary to its old record, take a new step ? Was it impossible that two great peoples of the world, who had been tied together by the course of events as rulers and ruled, should create a new relationship between them, **based** ^{on} reason, justice and peace? If that had been possible, the sorrows born of world war would have given place to a new-born hope; and the new order of reason and justice would have ~~uttered~~ ^{ushered} in a new dawn. If the British people could have proudly said to the world to-day that they had added such a new example to history, what a vast and unparalleled triumph this would have been for humanity. Certainly this was not an impossibility, but it was an amazingly difficult thing to do.

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GANDHIJI'S GREAT SOUL

In the prevailing darkness of the times, it is faith in the bright side of human nature which sustains the great soul of Mahatma Gandhi. He is always prepared to take advantage of every opening which might lead to a mutual settlement without feeling that he is weakening his unassailable position.

Since war began, several members of the British cabinet have tried to make the world believe that the old order of British imperialism has ended, and that to-day the British nation has no other aims except those of peace and justice. Which country could have more warmly acclaimed such a declaration than India ? But the fact is that in spite of these declarations, British imperialism stands in the way of peace and justice to-day exactly as it did before the War. The Indian demand was the touch-stone for all such claims. They were so tested and found to be counterfeit and untrue.

MINORITIES AND THE FUTURE

I have briefly placed before you the real question of the day. That is the vital question for us, all ~~else~~ are subsidiary to it. It was in relation to that question that the Congress put forward ^{its} ~~in~~ invitation to the British Government in September last, and ~~REMARK~~ made a clear and simple demand to which no community or group could possibly object. It was not in our remotest thoughts that the communal question could be raised in this connection. We realise that there are some groups in the country which cannot keep step with the Congress in the political struggle/^{or} ~~and~~ go as far as the Congress is prepared to go; we know that some do not agree with the method of direct action which the great majority of political India has adopted. But so far as the right of the Indian people to independence is concerned and the full admission

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of India's birth-right to freedom, an awakened and impatient India has passed far beyond the early stages and none dare oppose our demand. Even those classes who cling to their special interests and fear change ~~least~~^{lest} this might affect them adversely, are rendered helpless by the spirit of the times. They have to admit and to agree to the goal we have set before us.

A time of crisis is a testing time for all of us and as the great problem of the day has tested us and exposed many an aspect of our present-day politics. It has laid bare also the reality that lies behind the communal problem. Repeated attempts were made, both in England and India, to mix up the communal question with the vital political question of the day and thus to confuse the real issue. Again and again, it was sought to convince the world that the problem of the minorities barred the way to a proper solution of India's political problem.

IMPERIALISM STILL REIGNS

For a hundred and fifty years British imperialism has pursued the policy of divide and rule, and by emphasising internal consolidation of its own power. That was the evitable result of India's political subjection, and it is folly for us to complain and grow bitter. A foreign government can never encourage internal unity in the subject country for disunity is the surest guarantee for the continuance of its own domination. But when we were told, and the world was asked to believe, that British imperialism had ended, and the long chapter of Indian history dominated by it had closed, was it unreasonable for us to expect that British statesmen would at last give up this evil inheritance and not exploit the communal situation for political ends? But the time for this is

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yet distant; we may not cling to such vain hopes. So the last five months with their succession of events have established. Imperialism, in spite of all assurances to the contrary still flourishes; it has yet to be ended.

But whatever the roots of our problems might be, it is obvious that India, like other countries has her ~~own~~ internal problems. Of these, the communal problem is an important one. We do not and cannot expect the British Government to deny its existence. The communal problem is undoubtedly with us, and if we want to go ahead, we must need take it into account. Every step that we take by ignoring it will be a wrong step. The problem is there, to admit its existence, however, does not mean that it should be used as a weapon against India's national freedom. British Imperialism has always exploited it to this end. If Britain desires to end her imperialistic methods in India and close that dismal chapter of history, then the first signs of the change must naturally appear in her treatment of the communal problem.

THE CONGRESS POSITION

What is the Congress position in regard to this problem ? It has been the claim of the Congress, from its earliest beginnings, that it considers India as a nation and takes every step in the interest of the nation as a whole. This entitles the world to examine this claim strictly and the Congress must establish the truth of its assertion. I wish to examine afresh this question from this point of view.

There can be only three aspects of the communal problem; its existence, its importance and the method of its solution.

The entire history of the Congress demonstrates that it has always acknowledged the existence of the problem. It has never tried to minimise its importance.

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In dealing with this problem, it followed a policy which was the most suitable under the circumstances. It is difficult to conceive of a different or better course of action. If however, a better course could be suggested the Congress was always, and is to-day, eager to welcome it.

TWO BASIC PRINCIPLES

We could attach no greater importance to it, than to make it the first condition for the attainment of our national goal. The Congress has always held this belief; no one can challenge this fact. It has always held to two basic principles in this connection, and every step was taken deliberately with these in view.

(1) Whatever constitution is adopted for India there must be the fullest guarantees in it for the rights and interests of minorities.

(2) The minorities should judge for themselves what safeguards are necessary for the protection of their rights and interests. The majority should not decide this. Therefore the decision in this respect must depend upon the consent of the minorities and not on a majority vote.

The question of the minorities is not a special Indian problem. It has existed in other parts of the world. I venture to address the world from this platform and to enquire whether any juster and more equitable course of action can be adopted in this connection, than the one suggested above ? If so, what is it ? Is there any thing lacking in this approach, which necessitates that the Congress be reminded of its duty ? The Congress has always been ready to consider any failure in the discharge of its duty. It is so prepared to-day.

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I have been in the Congress for the last nineteen years. During the whole of this period there is not a single important decision of the Congress in the shaping of which I have not had the honour to participate. I assert that during these last nineteen years, not for a single day did the Congress think of solving this problem in any way other than the way I have stated above. This was not a mere assertion of the Congress, but its determined and decided course of action. Many a time during the last fifteen years, this policy was subjected to the severest tests, but it stood firm as a rock.

MINORITIES RIGHTS

The manner in which the Congress has dealt with this problem to-day in connection with the Constituent Assembly, throws a flood of light on these two principles and clarified them. The recognised minorities have a right, if they so please, to choose their representatives by their votes. The representatives will not have to ~~re~~ly upon the votes of any other community except their own. So far as the question of the rights and the interests of the minorities is concerned, the decision will not depend upon the majority of the votes in the Constituent Assembly. It will be subject to the consent of the minority. If unanimity is not achieved on any question, then an impartial tribunal, to which the minorities have also consented, will decide the matter. This last proviso is merely in the nature of a provision for a possible contingency, and is most unlikely to be required. If a more practical proposal is made, there can be no objection to it.

When these principles are accepted and acted upon by the Congress, what is it that obliges British statesmen to remind us so often of the problem of the minorities and to make the world believe that this stands in the way

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of Indian freedom? If it is really so, ^{why} ~~why~~ does not the British Government recognise clearly India's freedom and give us an opportunity to solve this problem for ever by mutual agreement amongst ourselves ?

Dissensions were sown and encouraged amongst us, and yet we are taunted because of them. We are told to put an end to our communal conflicts, but opportunity to do so is denied us. Such is the position deliberately created to thwart us; such are the chains that bind. But no difficulties or constraints can deter us from taking the right steps with courage and fortitude. Our path is full of obstacles but we are determined to overcome them.

FUTURE OF MUSLIMS

We have considered the problem of the minorities of India. But are the Muslims such a minority as to have the least doubt or fear about their future ? A small minority may legitimately have fears and apprehensions, but can the Muslims allow themselves to be disturbed by them ? I do not know how many of you are familiar with my writings twentyeight years ago, in the "Al-Hilal". If there are any such here, I would request them to refresh their memories. Even then I gave expression to my conviction, and I repeat this to-day, that in the texture of Indian politics, nothing is farther removed from the truth than to say that Indian Muslims occupy the position of a political minority. It is equally absurd for them to be apprehensive about their rights and interests in a democratic India. This fundamental mistake has opened the door to countless mis-understandings. False arguments were ^{built} ~~built~~ up on wrong premises. This error, on the one hand, brought confusion into the minds of Musalmans about their own true position, and on the other hand, it involved the world in misunderstandings, so that the picture of India

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could not be seen in right perspective.

AN UNTRUE PICTURE

If time had permitted, I would have told you in detail, how, during the last sixty years, this artificial and untrue picture of India was made, and whose hands traced it. In effect, this was the result of the same policy of divide and rule which took particular shape in the minds of British officialdom in India after the Congress launched the national movement. The object of this was to prepare the Musalmans for use against the new political awakening. In this plan, prominence was given to two points. First : that India~~x~~ was inhabited by two different communities, the Hindus and the Musalmans, and for this reason no demand could be made in the name of a united nation. Second : that numerically the Musalmans were far less than the Hindus, and because of this, the necessary consequence of the establishment of democratic institutions in India would be^{to} ~~established~~ the rule of the Hindu majority and to jeopardise the existence of the Muslims. I shall not go into any greater detail now. Should you however wish to know the early history of this matter, I would prefer you to the time of Lord Dufferin, a former Viceroy of India, and Sir Auckland Colvin, a former Lieutenant Governor of the N.W.P., now the United Provinces.

Thus were sown the seeds of disunity by British Imperialism ~~on~~ Indian soil. The plant grew and was ~~nurtured~~ and spread its nettles, and even though fifty years have passed since then the roots are still there.

MUSLIMS NOT A MINORITY

Politically speaking, the word minority does not mean just a group that is numerically smaller and therefore entitled to special protection. It means a group that is so small in number and so lacking in

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other qualities that give strength, that it has no confidence in its own capacity to protect itself from the much larger group that surrounds it. It is not enough that the group should be relatively the smaller, but that it should be absolutely so small as to be incapable of protecting its interests. Thus this is not merely a question of numbers; other factors count also. If a country has two major groups numbering million and two millions respectively it does not necessarily follow that because one is half the other, therefore it must call itself politically a minority and consider itself weak.

If this is the right test, let us apply it to the position of the Muslims in India. You will see at a glance a vast concourse, spreading out all over the country; they stand erect, and to imagine that they exist helplessly as a "minority" is to delude oneself.

The Muslims in India number between eighty and ninety millions. The same type of social or racial divisions, which affect other communities, do not divide them. The powerful bonds of Islamic brotherhood and equality have protected them to a large extent from the weakness that flows from social divisions. It is true that they number only one-fourth of the total population; but the question is not one of population ratio, but of the large numbers and the strength behind them. Can such a vast mass of humanity have any legitimate reason for apprehension that in a free and democratic India, it might be unable to protect its rights and interests?

UNFOUNDED APPREHENSIONS

These numbers are not confined to any particular area but spread out unevenly over different parts of the country. In four provinces out of eleven in India there is a Muslim majority, the other religious groups being minorities. If British Baluchistan is added there are

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five provinces with Muslim majorities. Even if we are compelled at present to consider this question on a basis of religious groupings, the position of the Muslims is not that of a minority only. If they are in a minority in seven provinces, they are in a majority in five. This being so there is absolutely no reason why they should be oppressed by the feeling of being a minority.

Whatever may be the details of the future constitution of India, we know that it will be an All-India federation which is, in the fullest sense, democratic, and every unit of which will have autonomy in regard to internal affairs. The ^{federal} ~~federal~~ centre will be concerned only with All-India matters of common concern, such as, foreign relations, defence, customs, etc.

Under the circumstances, can any one who has any conception of the actual working of a democratic constitution, allow himself to be led astray by this false issue of majority and minority. I cannot believe for an instant that there can be any room whatever for these misgivings in the picture of India's future. These apprehensions are arising because, in the words of a British statesman regarding Ireland, we are yet standing on the banks of the river and, though wishing to swim, are unwilling to enter the water. There is only one remedy; we should take the plunge fearlessly. No sooner is this done, we shall realise that all our apprehensions were without foundation.

A BASIC QUESTION

It is now nearly thirty years since I first attempted to examine this question as an Indian Musalman. The majority of the Muslims then were keeping completely apart from the political struggle and they were influenced by the same mentality of aloofness and antagonism, which prevailed amongst them previously in the year 1888. This

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depressing atmosphere did not prevent me from giving my anxious thought to this matter, and I reached quickly a final conclusion, which influenced my belief and action. I saw India, with all her many burdens, marching ahead to her future destiny. We were fellow-passengers in this boat and we could not ignore its swift passage through the waters; and so it became necessary for us to come to a clear and final decision about our plan of action. How were we to do so ? Not merely by skimming the surface of the problem but by going down to its roots, and then to consider our position. I did so and I realised that the solution of the whole problem depended on the answer to one question :

Do we, Indian Muslamans, view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence ?

If we view it with fear and suspicion, then undoubtedly we have to follow a different path. No present declaration, no promise for the future, no constitutional safeguards, can be a remedy for our doubts and fears. We are then forced to tolerate the existence of a third power. This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing and, if we follow this path of fear, we must needs look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place, and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world, which is free from the dark shadows of doubt, vacillation, inaction and apathy, and where the light of faith and determination, action and enthusiasm never fails. The confusions of the times, the ups and downs that come our way, the difficulties that beset our thorny path, cannot change the direction of our steps. It becomes our bounden duty then to march with assured steps to India's national

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goal.

I arrived at this definite conclusion without the least hesitation and every fibre of my being revolted against the former alternative. I could not bear the thought of it. I could not conceive it possible for a Musalman to tolerate this, unless he has rooted out the spirit of Islam from every corner of his being.

THE FIRST EFFORTS

I started the "Al Hilal" in 1912 and ~~of Islam~~
~~from every corner of his~~ put this conclusion of mine before the Muslims of India. I need not remind you that my cries were not without effect. The period from 1912 to 1918 marked a new phase in the political awakening of the Muslims. Towards the end of 1920, on my release after four years of internment, I found that the political ideology of the Musalmans had broken through its old mould and was taking another shape. Twenty years have gone by and much has happened since then. The tide of events has ever risen higher, and fresh waves of thought have enveloped us. But this fact still remains unchanged, that the general opinion amongst the Muslims is opposed to going back.

That is certain; they are not prepared to retrace their steps. But again they are full of doubts about their future path. I am not going into the reasons for this; I shall only try to understand the effects. I would remind my co-religionists that to-day I stand exactly where I stood in 1912 when I addressed them on this issue. I have given thought to all those innumerable occurrences which have happened since then; my eyes have watched them, my mind has pondered over them. These events did not merely pass me by; I was in the midst of them, a participant, and I examined every circumstance with care. I cannot be false to what I have myself seen and observed; I cannot quarrel with my own conviction; I cannot stifle

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the voice of my conscience. I repeat to-day what I have said throughout this entire period, that the ninety millions of Muslims of India have no other right course of action than the one to which I invited them in 1912.

Some of my co-religionists, who paid heed to my call in 1921, are in disagreement with me to-day. I do not wish to find fault with them, but I would make appeal to their sincerity and sense of responsibility. We are dealing with the destinies of peoples and nations. We cannot come to right conclusions if we are swept away by the passions of the moment. We must base our judgements on the solid realities of life. It is true that the sky is overcast to-day and the outlook is dark. The Muslims have to come into the light of reality. Let them examine every aspect of the matter again to-day, and they will find no other course of action open to them.

A UNITED NATION

I am a Muselman and am proud of that fact. Islam's splendid traditions of thirteen hundred years are my inheritance. I am unwilling to lose even the smallest part of this inheritance. The teaching and history of Islam, its arts and letters and civilisation are my wealth and my fortune. It is my duty to protect them.

As a Muselman I have a special interest in Islamic religion and culture and I cannot tolerate any interference with them. But in addition to these sentiments, I have others also which the realities and conditions of my life have forced upon me. The spirit of Islam does not come in the way of these sentiments; it guides and helps me forward. I am proud of being an Indian. I am a part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to

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build India. I can never surrender this claim.

INDIA'S DESTINY

It was India's historic destiny that many human races and cultures and religions should flow to her, finding a home in her hospitable soil, and that many a caravan should find rest here. Even before the dawn of history, these caravans trekked into India and wave after wave of new-comers followed. This vast and fertile land gave welcome to all and took them to her bosom. One of the last ^{of} these caravans, following the footsteps of its predecessors, was that of the followers of Islam. This came here and settled here for good. This led to a meeting of the culture-currents of two different races. Like the Ganga and Jamna they followed for a while through separate courses, but nature's immutable law brought them together and joined them in 'sangam'. This fusion was a notable event in history. Since then, destiny, in her own hidden way, began to fashion a new India in place of the old. We brought our treasures with us and India too was full of the riches of her own precious heritage. We gave our wealth to her and she unlocked the doors of her own treasures to us. We gave her, what she needed most, the most precious of gifts from Islam's treasury, the message of democracy and human equality.

Full eleven centuries have passed by since then. Islam has now as great a claim on the soil of India as Hinduism. If Hinduism has been the religion of the people here for several thousands of years, Islam also has been their religion for a thousand years. Just as a Hindu can say with pride that he is an Indian and follows Hinduism, so also we can say with equal pride that we are Indians and follow Islam. I shall enlarge this orbit still further. The Indian Christian is equally entitled to say with pride that he is an Indian and is following a religion of India namely Christianity.

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COMMON ACHIEVEMENTS

Eleven hundred years of common history have enriched India with our common achievements. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our culture, our art, our dress, our manners and customs, the innumerable happenings of our daily life, everything bears the stamp of our ^{joint} endeavour. There is indeed no aspect of our life which has escaped this stamp. Our languages were different, but we grew to use a common language; our manners and customs were dissimilar, but they acted and reacted on each other and thus produced a new synthesis. Our old dress may be seen only in ancient pictures of by-gone days; no one wears it to-day. This joint wealth is the heritage of our common nationality and we do not want to leave it and go back to the times when this joint life had not begun. If there are any Hindus amongst us who desire to bring back the Hindu life of a thousand years ago and more, they dream, and such dreams are vain fantasies. So also if there are any Muslims who wish to revive their past civilization and culture, which they brought a thousand years ago from Iran and Central Asia, they dream also and the sooner they wake up the better. These are unnatural fancies which cannot take root in the soil of reality. I am one of those who believe that revival may be a necessity in a religion but in social matters it is a denial of progress.

This thousand years of our joint life has moulded us into a common nationality. This cannot be done artificially. Nature does her fashioning through her hidden processes in the course of centuries. The cast has now been moulded and destiny has set her seal upon it. Whether we like it nor not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible. No fantasy or artificial scheming

Wednesday, March 20, 1940

to separate and divide can break this unity. We must accept the logic of fact and history and engage ourselves in the fashioning of our future destiny.

C O N C L U S I O N

I shall not take any more of your time. My address must end now. But before I do so, permit me to remind you that our success depends upon three factors: unity, discipline and full confidence in Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. The glorious past record of our movement was due to his great leadership, and it is only under his leadership that we can look forward to a future of successful achievement.

The time of our trial is upon us. We have already focussed the world's attention. Let us endeavour to prove ourselves worthy. -(UNITED PRESS.)

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Wednes, March 20, 1940

MAULANA AZAD, ADDRESSING THE DELEGATES, SAID :

" Friends, you know the step we are going to take is beset with difficulties and dangers. But that cannot daunt our spirit. Even if we have to sacrifice our lives we cannot be daunted. That is why despite the foul weather and torrential showers I have come before you. We will go on with our business and finish it in a short time. If in course of the night the sky clears up, which we hope will be the case, the session would reassemble to-morrow at 8 in the morning. In any case, it would meet to-morrow evening. As President of this session I have said what I had to say and I declare the session open. I now call upon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to move the main resolution."

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Thursday, March 21, 1940

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD'S PARTING MESSAGE

PRESIDENT'S PARTING MESSAGE

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in his concluding speech, declared :

" You have assembled here from various parts of the country. This township, which has been built up for the session, will be uprooted after your departure. But it would have established a new city of hopes in your hearts. That city cannot be inhabited by mere shouts and threats, but by solid work. You should be able to understand the need of hour. The Congress has reached a stage when divergent and conflicting views are arising. This is not surprising in itself. But we must all realise that unity is the essence of our organisation. A lot has been said about leadership. The consensus of opinion favours Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. But some people do not believe in his methods. It is quite possible that people may differ with regard to methods. But the mere fact that they differ with regard to methods does not mean that his method is faulty. It is open to those, who do not agree with his method to change the leadership. It cannot be bothways. They cannot have his leadership and yet not accept his methods.

"If we want Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, we must accept his method and fulfil the conditions laid down by him before we can expect him to lead us. The issue is thus very simple. I am unable to understand why we make so much fuss about our differences."

REVITALISING THE CONGRESS

Dealing with the future Maulana Azad said that he proposed to reorientate the work of the Congress and assured the delegates that he would do his utmost to prevent Congress Committees from accumulating rust and lapsing into stagnation.

Thursday, March 21, 1940

Maulana Azad proceeding referred to the Parliamentary programme, which, while it had strengthened them, had also revealed some shortcomings. "These must be removed before any progress could be made and a new spirit should motivate the Congress Committee's work. We should not be carried away by dreams about achieving independence, but must awake from our slumber. We must bring back discipline in Congress ranks. It is an hour of trial for everyone and we must rise to the occasion and prove to the world that we can come out successful from the trials."

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Thursday, April 4, 1940.

CONGRESS PLAN FOR STRUGGLE - RASHTRAPATI'S HINT

A.I.C.C. REORGANISATION PLAN

Allahabad, Apl. 3.

That after finishing the next Congress Working Committee meeting to be held at Wardha on April 15, he intends to spend the following three months in some hill station probably Mussoorie, was what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President said in course of a brief interview to the 'United Press' representative ^{to-day} ~~today~~. Asked about what had been the result of the despatch of the Congress resolution of the Ramgarh session to the Viceroy, the Maulana said that resolutions of the Congress Working Committee generally reach the quarters of the Government of India through the Press and hence in this case also the same thing should have happened, and he was not aware of any result in the matter.

U.P. MINORITY COMMITTEE

Enquired whether he had attended the meeting of the United Provinces Minority Committee held yesterday afternoon at Anand Bhawan Maulana Azad said that he was present, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was also present. He had given some advice to the Committee regarding its future programme of work. He had suggested them that they should scrap out several sub-committees which existed in that organisation and make it into only one, namely the Minorities Committee. He wanted them to work in a more organised manner, briskly and comprehensively. Allahabad would remain the headquarters for its office, and not Lucknow. Doctor Z. Ahmad who is Joint Secretary, U.P.C.C., would act as Secretary of the Minorities Committee and Maulana Azad had advised them to push various work through that Committee regarding the minorities question in the province.

DIVISION OF INDIA

Asked about what he had to say in connection with the resolution of the Muslim League at the Lahore session and Mr. Jinnah's campaign for division of India, Maulana Azad expressed disapproval of the move and said that he felt it so absurd and meaningless that he was not inclined even to say anything on it. But yet he would be

Thursday, April 4, 1940.

very soon writing a series of articles on the subject for the Press.

U. P. CONGRESS RESOLUTION

As regards the resolution passed by the Council of United Provinces Congress Committee the proceedings of which he watched Maulana Azad observed that he thoroughly approved it. He liked that similar steps may be taken by other provincial Congress bodies also.

He also added that during the forthcoming Congress Working Committee meeting at Wardha a plan would be chalked out for all Provincial Congress Committees to transform their respective Provincial Congress Committees into similar supreme satyagraha committees as has been done by the U.P.C.C. Council and to form two or three other committees of the like nature added to the supreme Satyagraha committees in order that work would proceed with speed. While watching the deliberations of the U.P.C.C. Council meeting he had advised them that their scheme of the formation of the supreme Satyagraha Committee was what he had just liked, as instead of wasting time between now and the next Congress Working Committee Meeting when they would expect the full plan. Their going ahead with preparation as found in their resolution was a sound policy which could be followed by other provinces with profit.

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE VACANCY

Asked whether he had been able to make his decision to fill the fifteenth place in the Working Committee which was still vacant, Maulana Azad said that he would make an announcement regarding his choice after about six days. As to who could be the probable person, he said that it would be better if he did not say anything at this stage. Asked whether the offer would be made to Acharya Narendra Dev, Maulana Azad said that it might be done so, but he would take the next six days for his announcement from Calcutta.

Enquired about his health as he felt rather indisposed yesterday Maulana said his indisposition had continued this morning also, but he was gradually feeling normal.

He hoped to remain at Allahabad till that evening. He will be

Thursday, April, 4, 1940.

going straight back to Calcutta. After attending the next Working Committee meeting at Wardha he intended to go to a hill station.

As regards the Nationalist Muslim Conference to be held at Delhi he said that it had nothing to do with the Congress. But if his advice was sought by its members, he would be available to them at Delhi where he might go at the time of the Conference which is about March 27 and the following days.

Asked about his plan of the reorganisation of the A.I.C.C. office he replied that though he was not able to visit the A.I.C.C office till now owing to his visits to the U.P. Congress Training Camp and the sitting of the Minority Committee, he was studying various matters. But to-day he was going to the A.I.C.C. Office and would make all necessary detailed examination of things with a view to effect certain reorganisation plan. He would be issuing a statement regarding the plan he has decided upon.

Saturday, April 6, 1940.

WE HAVE TAKEN OUR DECISION
COMING STRUGGLE

Maulana Azad's Address To U.P. Congress Leaders

Allahabad, April 5.

"We have taken our decision and the nature of the circumstances is such that the time is not far when instead of our having to take the step, we will find our steps lifted of their own and we will be marching ahead in the thick of our trial," said Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, addressing the Congress leaders at the closing function to-day in the training camp at Naini.

"We have accepted Gandhiji's lead and his method and we will follow in his wake. The moment of our trial has come and we will not be found wanting", added the Moulana.

The Congress Working Committee will soon take up the matter of co-ordinating the volunteer work which is now going on in the different provinces throughout the country, declared Moulana Azad. The Moulana said that he had come for important consultations and found a pleasant surprise in the shape of the camp at Naini.

He continued : " Believe me when I say that you have done valuable work during these eight days of the camp. You have set an example to the whole of the country. The times are critical and we never know if there will be time for such practice again. That the leaders should have thrown themselves wholeheartedly in the volunteer spirit has great significance. It will break the psychological barrier between the leaders and the volunteers.

" Volunteer work is not of any secondary but of primary importance for us," concluded Moulana Azad. "In fact, compulsory training in volunteering should be essential in the make up of a congressmen^a. I have always cherished the ideal of compulsory military drill, but somehow we have fallen short of it so far."

The Moulana felt satisfied with the progress that the volunteer movement had made in the United Provinces and with the valuable work done in this connection. - (A.P.)

Sunday, April 7, 1940.

IMMINENCE OF COMING STRUGGLE PLEA FOR SELF-
ANALYSIS

Rastrapati Inaugurates National Week

Need For Whole Nation Standing Up As A Disciplined
Unit Under Trusted And Tried Leader

The importance of the constructive programme of the Congress as a preparation for the coming struggle was emphasised by Rastrapati Abul Kalam Azad, inaugurating the National Week organised by the newly-elected Bengal Provincial Congress Committee at the Wellington Square on Saturday evening.

"We have enough of words, " said Maulana Saheb :

"Time for action has come. During the next seven days let us have the closest of self-analysis and retrospection to see whether we are prepared to fight for the contry's freedom. Let us have a searching inquiry into our hearts and see whether we have realised the full implications of the principles of the constructive programme of the Congress so as to translate them into action."

The speakers who followed all emphasised the imminence of the coming struggle and the need for the whole nation standing up as a disciplined unit under the command of the trusted and tried leader, Mahatma Gandhi. Appeals to close up ranks in view of the coming struggle were made.

NEED OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

The meeting was well-attended. In view of the fact that it was the first public meeting organised by the newly elected Bengal Provincial Congress Committee which has been formed after the election conducted by the Ad Hoc Committee, special significance attached to the meeting. There was no untoward happening. At the begining before the loud speaker began to work there were raised some shouts which had a hint of hostility. But these were not repeated. The proceedings were very orderly.

Describing the attainment of Hindu Moslem unity as the first of the three principles in the constructive programme of the

(programme of the)

Congress, the Maulana observed that they should spare no pains in bringing about such unity between the two major communities of the country which would inject a new life into their national struggle. Awake and asleep, individually or in associations, they must try to promote unity in thought and deed, in order that the country might forge ahead in the struggle facing them.

Untouchability, the second factor in the constructive programme, was a menace to the growth of the national life and they must make every effort to remove this national slur.

Khaddar, proceeded the Maulana, was the third principle, but few at present understood its full implications. It brought the poorer of the masses nearer to them and thereby knit the people together.

JALLIANWALLA BAG DAY

Referring to the Jallianwalla Bag Day, the Congress President said that the blood ^{split} ~~split~~ on the 13th of April twenty years ago in Amritsar had infused new blood into the people every year they met for a week to commemorate this incident and to mark the day which had given a new impetus to the national life of India.

"We must, during this week, make a searching enquiry into our hearts and see whether the so-called convictions that we uphold are sincere or ~~a~~ lip-deep and chalk out our paths accordingly."

The Maulana referred to the death of the Rev. C. F. Andrews, whom he described as the man belonging to no particular nation, but to humanity. He also condoled the death of Mr. Mahim Chandra Das, the grand old man of the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

April, 7, 1940.

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WEEK'S PROGRAMME

In winding up the proceedings, Maulana Azad said that the time for action had come. They had enough of words. The next seven days should be spent in self-analysis and retrospection in order to prepare themselves for the coming struggle. By this analysis they should leave out the dross from their heart and make it of pure gold.

Referring to Bengal, Maulana Saheb said that Bengal had been the plioneer in the field of struggle for freedom during the last 50 years. Even a century ago while the whole country was steeped in darkness Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the standard bearer of national freedom.

If Bengal did not occupy the position she did formerly they had to consider calmly the reason for it. And after finding the reason they should set about to win back for Bengal her former position. He believed that Bengal who had led in the van of national struggle for freedom in the past would again win back her position of glory.

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Thursday, April 11, 1940.

STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The Need for Disciplined Action Emphasised

OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL WEEK

Rastrapati Condemns Rowdy Elements In Public Meetings

A strong and scathing condemnation of the organised hooliganism, which of late has disfigured ^{Bengal's} ~~Bengal's~~ public life, was uttered by Rastrapati Abul Kalam Azad addressing a big assemblage that had gathered on Wednesday evening at Mahomed Ali Park in observance of the National Week.

Sj. Surendra Mohan Ghosh occupied the chair.

Rowdies, who brought about the dissolution of functions at Shradhananda and Deshbandhu Parks, said Maulana Azad, appeared to be men sent out by interested parties for the purpose and everything was carried out according to plans previously hatched.

But those who sent minor boys to throw stones at their elders in a shameless manner must realise that the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee was not going to give up its work and programme for fear of those cowardly assaults.

"I hope" the Rastrapati observed, "the B.P.C.C. will take up the challenge and continue to carry on its work non-violently and in right earnest even under shower of stones and brickbats."

The deplorable events that had happened at the ^{last} ~~last~~ two meetings organised by the B.P.C.C. at the Shradddhananda and Deshbandhu Parks, said Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, formed a disgraceful ^{episode} ~~episode~~ in the public life of Bengal. Those who brought about the dissolution of these functions, it appeared, were sent out by interested parties for the purpose and everything was carried out according to plan previously hatched.

As regards the incident at the Charka demonstration at Shradhananda Park, Maulana Azad proceeded, rowdies appeared at the scene while Congressmen were peacefully plying their charkas. Many of them were assaulted; but ^{of} Congressmen, who were spinning

Thursday, April 11, 1940.

there gave a slap to the assailants the latter would have been crushed out. But they were bound by the pledge of non-violence. They were not to retaliate but to suffer silently without offering any resistance. Maulana Azad congratulated the Congressmen on the patience and moderation they had exhibited on the occasion.

Similar tactics were employed at Deshbandhu Park where two Congressmen received serious injuries. There too hooligans attempted to break up the meeting. The loudspeaker was interfered with ^{and} ~~as~~ lights were put out and the meeting had to be prematurely abandoned.

If things went on in such a manner, Maulana Azad added, public life in this province would soon be an impossibility. Events of similar character had happened at Narayangunj the other day. Those who sent minor boys to throw stones at their elders in such shameless manner must realise that the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee was not going to stop its work and programme for fear of cowardly assaults.

He hoped that the B.P.C.C. would take up the challenge and continue to carry on its work non-violently and in right earnest even under shower of stones and brickbats.

Proceeding Maulana Azad drew the attention of the audience to the three-fold programme of the Congress, namely Hindu-Muslim unity, abolition of untouchability and propagation of spinning and Khaddar. They must search their hearts and ask themselves whether they were carrying out each of the above programmes as they ought to have done.

The evil of untouchability had been eating into the vitals of the nation. If India wanted to achieve freedom it was the bounden duty of every Indian to treat his depressed fellowmen as his equal and extend to them fair and equitable treatment in every respect.

Maulana Sahib was pained to see such things as 'Hindu tea and Muslim tea' 'Hindu water and Muslim water' as they hawked in railway stations. If Railways had been a provincial matter

Thursday, April 11, 1940.

and the Congress Governments ran the administration these distinctions would certainly have been removed. These things, in his estimation did not serve the purpose of unity between the two communities.

The door to freedom would always remain closed to the Indians if they failed to carry out the constructive programme recommended by the Congress and wipe out the divisions that existed among them.

Sunday, April 14, 1940.

PREPARING FOR COMING FIGHT NEXT CONGRESS MOVE

Congressmen To Be Asked To Resign From Local
Bodies

POLICY REGARDING LEGISLATURES

Proposals Before Working Committee: Moulana
Azad Interviewed

WARDHA, April 13.

The view that Congressmen in local bodies all over India would soon have to resign their membership of those bodies was expressed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, interviewed at Nagpur this evening en route to Wardha.

He added that when the Congress was on the threshold of a big struggle it was useless for Congressmen to divert their attention to other secondary matters.

Maulana Azad said that the question of Congress members resigning their seats in the Legislatures in the Provinces where they were not in a majority such as ⁱⁿ Bengal, Assam and the Punjab was also engaging his attention and would be considered by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha.

He would have asked Congress members in the Legislatures even in majority Provinces to come out, but that perhaps would give British Government an opportunity to form minority Ministries in those Provinces and the proposal, therefore, could not be entertained.

GANDHIJI'S PROGRAMME

"Mahatma Gandhi has placed before the country a triple constructive programme, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity, Harijan uplift and charkha and khadi and we should endeavour to make it a success, declared Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressing a public meeting here to-night.

The Maulana exhorted Congressmen to strive for Hindu-Muslim

unday, April 14, 1940

unity without which progress was difficult. "Weakmen cannot be world teachers," he added, "They must be strong enough so that India can give a special message to the world".

Referring to untouchability the Maulana said: "If we cannot treat harijans as equals we cannot ask for equality. Khadi and charka provide food for the needy and the poor and they have special significance in our programme. - (A.P.).

Tuesday, April 23, 1940.

RASTRAPATI'S REPLY TO ZETLAND

INDIA SPEECH IN LORDS

Constituent Assembly Meets Every Difficulty
R a i s e d

POSITION UNCHANGED BY STATEMENT

Emphasis On Right of Self-Determination :
Britain's Unwillingness to Part
with Power.

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WARDHAGANJ, April 22.

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD, Congree President, prior to his departure for Calcutta this morning issued the following statement to the United Press on Lord Zetland's recent speech in Parliament on India :-

"Lord Zetland's speech leaves things where they have been since the break down of the negotiations between Lord Linlithgow and Gandhiji in February last.

" I can only say that every difficulty that the Secretary of State raises ^{is} in complete^{ly} met by the proposed Consitituent Assembly. The issue is simple. Is the British Government prepared to admit the right of self-determination for India ? If she is, then, there can be only one proper method of finally deciding all the problems, that is, they should be referred to the elected representatives of India . Only such an Assembly can deal with problems relating to Hindus and Muslims and the Indian States.

" But if the British Government is not prepared to accept this position then it is clear that they want to hold India by force. In such a case there can be no common ground for mutual understanding. I, therefore, fail to understand why the Sedretary of State continues to repeat the difficulty about the minorities and the Princies. "

CHARGE OF COERCING MINORITIES REFUTED

" Who wants the British Govern^{ment}~~ment~~ to coerce the minorities against their will ? Who says that a decision should be forced on the unwilling Mussalmans ? The Congress does not want to

Tuesday, April 23, 1940.

dictate its own terms to others. It admits the fullest right of the minorities to formulate their own safeguards. It has no hesitation in admitting the right of the Muslims to determine their own method for safeguarding their rights and interests through their representatives. It only wants the recognition of a correct and democratic method of approach to ~~the~~ problems. The recognised minorities can send their representatives to the Assembly through separate electorates, if they choose to do so. So far as the settlement of their problem is concerned, it would not depend ~~on~~ the vote of the majority.

LEAGUE SCHEME

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" The Muslim League has presented at its Lahore session the idea of dividing India into Hindu and Muslim India. This conception is so unreal, crude, fallacious and impracticable that on reconsideration the League itself would probably not insist on its realisation. But so far as the Congress is concerned, it has no hesitation in saying that this matter may also be entrusted to the Muslim representatives of the proposed Assembly. The right to take such a step can vest only in the Mussalmans who are elected by ^{Mussalmans} ~~Muslims~~ themselves for such a purpose. The League can present any scheme, but it cannot claim that the scheme is acceptable by the totality or even the majority of the ^{Mussalmans} ~~Muslims~~. I have no misgivings about the attitude of the Muslim members of such an Assembly. They would never favour a vivisection of India.

STRANGE ALLEGATION

The strangest portion of the speech of the Secretary of State is the one which he has chosen as his peroration. It ends thus, provided that 'Reuter's' Agency has reported the speech fully :

Tuesday, April 23, 1940.

"Will the Congress refrain from closing the door upon that unity of India which they themselves so passionately desire? It is not too much to say that upon the answer which the Congress Party will give to that question hangs the future of India." I tried to reach the meaning of these words but have to admit that I have failed. What action of the Congress can be construed to bear the meaning given by the Secretary of State ? The Congress stands for Complete Independence. This is clearly impossible without communal unity. But neither the one nor the other can be had without an Assembly really representative of the people.

There is no machinery which can give real unity. The Assembly and it alone can determine the way of unity and determine India's status. Lord Zetland's speech seems to show that the British Government do not wish to part with power. They will not recognise India's right to determine for herself what she wants." - (United Press.)

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26, 1940.

NO CHANGE OF VISION

Britain's Attitude Towards India

MAULANA AZAD ON AMERY'S STATEMENT

" Congress Point of View Stated Clearly
More Than Once "

NAINI TAL, May 25.

"It is to be regretted that there is not the slightest shadow of a change in the angle of vision of the British Cabinet about India, " observed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, interviewed by the Associated Press on Mr. Amery's statement in the House of Commons.

The Maulana added: "Both in letter as well as in spirit, the new Secretary of States repeats the attitude of his predecessor about which the Congress point of view has been stated clearly more than once. "

Saturday, June 8, 1940.

RESUMPTION OF OFFICE

CONGRESS MINISTRIES

Maulana Azad Holds Press Report As
Baseless

NAINITAL, June 7.

Interviewed by the "Associated Press" in connection with the Press report that the former Premiers of Congress provinces would meet in Delhi on June 13, under the presidency of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad with a view to examine the possibility of the Ministers' return to office, Maulana Azad expressed surprise on the above statement and said that it was absolutely baseless. The Maulana has no knowledge of any such conference and so far as the Congress was concerned, he added, the resumption of office under the present circumstances was quite out of question. The Congress, he continued, firmly adhered to the decision taken on October 17, 1939.

Continuing, the Maulana said "The Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Huq met me in Calcutta and we had some talk about the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. He proposed a Premiers' conference to discuss the matter. I told him that such a conference might not be of much use under the prevailing circumstances and suggested that if he along with Premiers of the Punjab, Sind and the N.W.F.P. could meet me on some future occasion we may then discuss the problem informally and see if we could reach some tangible solution. Then we may pursue it still further. I have promised him to try and find out an occasion for such a meeting. After coming to Nainital, I had correspondence with Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan also about the matter. It is quite possible that someone might have got scent of this matter and gave it the shape of a Premiers' conference for the purpose of resuming office. " - (A.P.).

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Saturday, June 15, 1940.

MUSLIM PREMIERS' MEETING

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED

Maulana Azad Forbids Press Speculation

NEW DELHI, June 14.

In the course of an interview with a representative of the 'Associated Press' about the informal talks between him and the Premiers of the Punjab and Sind and others, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said :

"My attention has been drawn to certain speculations in the Press relating to yesterday's informal talks which have appeared in the Press to-day. I deplore the fact that some of them are entirely unfounded. It is absolutely incorrect that the recognition or non-recognition of any particular organisation was one of the questions discussed. The talks were entirely concerned with the Hindu-Muslim problem generally and there was no occasion for any other question to arise. The issue of approaching the communal problem in the light of new circumstances was explored, I earnestly request the Press not to indulge in speculations which may lead to misunderstandings, I also assured the Press and the public that as soon as definite stage is reached in these talks no time will be lost in taking them into confidence. So far the talks have been purely exploratory with a view to discovering a suitable method of approach. Press speculations unfortunately have a way of creating misunderstandings which some times lead to serious difficulties, and problems which can otherwise be easily settled have to await their solution for a long time simply because an unwarranted assumption finds publicity through the Press.

Monday, July 8, 1940.

WAZIRISTAN SITUATION :

MAULANA AZAD'S STATEMENT

NEW DELHI, July 7

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement on the Waziristan situation :-

" The Congress Working Committee have given frequent and earnest thought to the problem of raiding on the Frontier. They were distressed by this because of the suffering and insecurity it caused, and also because it led to bitterness and ill-will between our people and our neighbours across the Frontier. They realised, however, that the way to solve this problem was to approach the border tribes in a friendly way. I advised Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his colleagues of the Frontier Province to seek contacts with the Waziries by sending a deputation to Waziristan, but unfortunately the Government refused to give permission for this deputation.

"The Working Committee have again considered the grave situation that exists and conferred with ^{Khan} ~~Khan~~ Abdul Ghaffar Khan. They have decided to depute two of their members, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai and Mr. Asaf Ali, to proceed to the Frontier, to develop contacts with the Waziris and other border tribes, and to study the problem in all its aspects. I am sure that their visit will prove of help to us in dealing with this problem. I trust that the Government will give every facility to these two representatives of ours.

" It has long been our declared policy and desire to have friendly relations with our neighbour nations and peoples, and we are convinced that when we have the chance, we shall be able to do so with advantage to all concerned. A free India will be strong enough to protect her frontiers, but the real strength we seek to build is the friendship of our border peoples. We shall try to understand their difficulties and make them understand ours, and the contacts ~~and~~ that we shall develop will, we trust, bring peace and security and economic betterment to both sides of the frontiers." - (A.P).

Saturday, July 27, 1940.

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COLLECTION OF WAR FUNDS

Compulsory Levies & Coercion Should be Stopped

M. AZAD'S INTERVIEW

POONA, July, 26.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, explained at a press conference after this morning's meeting of the Congress Working Committee the situation arising out of the Congress Working Committee's Wardha statement and Delhi resolution.

The Congress President was of emphatic opinion that there was no departure whatever in the present position of the Congress from what it was before the Wardha meeting. He explained that neither the Wardha statement of the Working Committee regarding non-violence, nor the Delhi resolution offering the co-operation in the matter of organising the country's defences, on condition that Indian independence was recognised and a national Government enjoying the confidence of the elected members of the Central Assembly, formed a marked departure from the fundamental position taken up by the Congress in its resolution adopted at Wardha immediately after the declaration of war in September 1939. That resolution, continued the Maulana, made it clear that the Congress was prepared to cooperate with the British Government if the latter satisfied the Congress with regard to its war aims in their application to India and also recognised India's independence.

QUESTION OF NON-VIOLENCE

On the question of non-violence, the Maulana was clear that at no stage had the Congress declared that it would pursue the policy of non-violence in the matter of meeting external aggression and internal disorder, for the simple reason that the issue had never arisen before. He emphasised that in regard to every other aspect of the Congress programme, the Congress still adhered to the policy of non-violence. Even to-day no external situation had actually arisen necessitating such clarification of the Congress attitude, but Mahatma Gandhi felt that the Congress owed it to the country to clarify its position in the matter and the Working Committee ...

Saturday, July 27, 1940.

... had accordingly defined its attitude. In doing so the majority of the members of the Committee felt that while they fully endorsed Mahatma Gandhi's views on non-violence, they did not feel that then country was ready to adept non-violence in respect of meeting external aggression and internal disorder.

Even the five members of the Committee, continued the Maulana, who remained neutral, when the Delhi resolution was passed, did so not on political grounds but purely on grounds of principle, as they were one with Mahatma Gandhi. On the political aspect of the question these five members were in full agreement with the rest of the Committee both in regard to extending co-operation and theformation of a National Government. Their difference with the rest of the Committee on the question of non-violence was one of principle, which as things were to-day did not actually clash with the position taken up by the Working Committee, because external aggression was only a distant contingency.

DELHI RESOLUTION

Answering a further question the Maulana said that the Delhi resolution contained nothing new which had not been in the resolution of the Committee passed in September last, except the question of formation of a National Government at the Centre, but then this idea was at the root of the demand for independence made by the Congress in that resolution.

The Congress President said that the Delhi resolution would be placed before the All-India Congress Committee for endorsement. The Committee had not yet decided in what form the Wardha statement of June last should be placed before the All-India Congress Committee for approval. Most probably a brief resolution will be framed asking for approval of this statement thus affording full opportunity for the All-India Congress Committee to express its opinion on that statement. There will also be a third resolution clarifying it. - (A.P.)

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unday July 28, 1940.

A.I.C.C. CONFIRMS WARDHA STATEMENT
PRINCIPLE OF NON-VIOLENCE

ld
Shout Not Be Extended To India's National Defence

STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Congress Volunteers Bound By Their Pledge To Remain
Non-Violent in Discharge of Their Duty.

POONA, July 27.

The Committee met at the Congress House this afternoon,
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presiding.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad made a statement explaining the two
official resolutions as also the circumstances which led to the issuing
of the Wardha statement on the question of non-violence and the
Delhi resolution. He emphatically denied that these two documents
marked any departure from the past policy of the Congress and
asserted that these were in conformity with past resolutions of
the Congress. He also emphasised that the Congress adhered strictly
to the policy of non-violence in all respects except in the case
of meeting external aggression and internal disorder. The Congress
President averred that those members of the Working Committee who
had remained neutral at Delhi did so not because of any political
differences but because of their different approach on the question
of non-violence.

Maulana Azad reviewed the position leading up to the Wardha
Statement and the Delhi resolution of the Congress Working
Committee. He said that it was hardly four months and two weeks
since they met at Ramgarh but during this short period the world
had changed almost out of recognition. This change was not only in
respect of outward form but it had almost brought about a revolution
in ideas and beliefs. It would not be possible for us not to be
affected by all that has happened and, therefore, it becomes our
duty to review our own position and take stock of the situation
with a view of seeing what changes we should make in our own atti-
tude.

Sunday, July 28, 1940.

" Two important decisions of the Congress Working Committee are to be placed before you. One of these is known as the Wardha Statement. Although there is nothing new in it, as it relates to the basic policy of the Indian National Congress, it becomes our duty to consider it as this House represents the Congress."

Maulana Azad continuing said that it was not at the Wardha meeting in June last that Mahatma Gandhi raised the question of non-violence for the first time. He had raised it two years ago. In September, 1938 when the All-India Congress Committee met at Delhi. At this meeting of the Congress Working Committee Mahatma Gandhi raised the issue of extending the principle of non-violence which the Congress had followed in regard to its internal policy for last twenty years to other spheres.

MAHATMAJI'S ATTITUDE

" Mahatma Gandhi wanted the Congress at this stage to declare that a free India would eschew all violence and would have no army to defend the country against aggression. The Congress should thus depend entirely upon non-violence for the purpose of dealing with internal disorders and external aggression. Mahatma Gandhi felt that he had to give the message of non-violence to the world and if he could not persuade his own countrymen to accept it, it would be difficult for him to preach it to others. The Congress Working Committee felt itself unable to accept this position and explained its difficulties to Mahatma Gandhi. The issue however did not assume any serious proportions then as the Munich Agreement postponed the war.

"The issue was again raised by Mahatma Gandhi when war broke out in September last. In November last when Gandhi went to interview the Viceroy he asked the Maulana and the members of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to relieve him of the responsibility of guiding the Congress policy and leave him free to pursue in his own way the policy of non-violence. The

Sunday, July 28, 1940.

The Committee, however once again persuaded Mahatma Gandhi to postpone the matter. In Ramgarh Mahatma Gandhi raised this question for the third time. On this occasion Mahatma Gandhi also referred to other weaknesses in the Congress organisation and expressed a desire to be relieved of responsibility. This came as a shock to the Working Committee and if I had not insisted too much and practically forced Mahatma Gandhi to postpone the issue once again, a crisis would have arisen as early as Ramgarh.

" You will thus see that this issue had been hanging fire for over two years and when we met in Wardha in June last Mahatma Gandhi wanted the Committee to make up its mind once for all, as the international situation had become so delicate and he felt the decision on such a vital issue could not be postponed any longer. Even then I tried to persuade Mahatma Gandhi once again to postpone the matter because I knew what would be the result of such a decision. There is not a soul in the Congress who is not anxious to go the whole hog with Mahatma Gandhi, if he can help it; but we cannot shut our eyes against hard facts. We know that arms³ and ammunitions have not been able to save the freedom of France, Holland, Belgium, and Norway but we also know that human society has come to a stage in which even after realising the futility of armed resistance, people are not prepared to give up force. We had not the courage to declare that we shall organise a State in this country without an armed force. If we did that it would be wrong on our part. True that Mahatma Gandhi had to give his message of non-violence to the world and therefore, it is his duty to propagate it but we have to consider our position as the representatives of the Indian nation meeting in the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress is a political organisation pledged to win the political independence of the country. It is not an organisation for organising world peace.

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"Honestly we cannot go as far as Mahatma Gandhi wants us to go. We admit that it is a weakness on our part but it is a weakness which we share with entire humanity. Even if we cannot go with Mahatma Gandhi the whole hog we do not wish to stop him from pursuing his own path. Realising the loss that the Congress would suffer on being deprived of Mahatma Gandhi's guidance. I was tempted to approach him once again to defer his decision on this issue. I had thrice succeeded in my attempt but this time, I failed because Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that it was no use postponing his decision on this vital issue for a while for the moment was fast approaching when the Congress would have to take a final decision and therefore, it was better they decided to follow their respective paths. The next morning I placed the matter before the Working Committee and invited separately the opinion of each member. We all felt that we were not able to take up the grave responsibility of declaring that we would completely eschew violence even when we had to deal with internal disorders in this country or external aggression. But we were quite clear in our minds that so far as the work of the Congress in respect of winning the independence of the country is concerned non-violence would continue to occupy the same place in the Congress programme that it has occupied all these twenty years. We all feel that the slightest diviation in this respect will mean political suicide for the Congress leading to all political life in this country.

EFFICACY OF NON-VIOLENCE

"Whatever success we have achieved in our struggle during all these years has been due to our unflinching faith in non-violence, and if we have not succeeded to the extent to which we ought to have succeeded, it is merely due to our inability to practice non-violence to the fullest extent. If we ever give up this ideal, we shall be burying the Congress. I must tell you that there were some friends like Babu Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghose, Mr. Kripalani and Mr. Shankarrao Deo who felt that they should go whole hog with Mahatma Gandhi. The Congress President then

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referred to the Delhi meeting of the Congress Working Committee in the first week of July and the resolution passed there and said that there were people who thought that by passing these resolutions the Congress Working Committee had made a departure from past resolutions. I wish to emphasise that this is a wrong view. Even if we wished to take new step we could not do so because we have behind us a series of resolutions and statements issued from time to time by the Working Committee during the past few months. We cannot demolish all these. We have not the right to do so. We have not the power to do so. Changes in the international situation however, are so serious that we cannot shut our eyes to them and proceed blindly. The new situation demanded a solution from us and we have said that as a provisional measure there should be a National Government in this country but we have not given up any of our fundamental demands.

GANDHIJI'S PLACE

The Congress President drew attention of the House to the fact that although Mahatma Gandhi would not be responsible for the policy of the Congress any longer, his advice would always be available to the Working Committee and the Congress. Our relations will continue with him as long as he lives and I pray to ^{God} ~~god~~ that he may be spared long to guide us. We must realise that the nature of his guidance will not be the same as before and this adds ^{greatly} ~~greatly~~ to our responsibility. We have a great objective to achieve; we have an ideal before us which is sufficient to inspire any group of people. There may be ups and down and difficulties may beset our path but we need not be disheartened or dispirited by these.

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" We have to solve every difficulty that presents itself to us and we have also to recognise the hard fact of Mahatma Gandhi's separation from us. We must ^{bear} ~~bare~~ it bravely and courageously in this difficult hour, it is our duty to be united. I therefore, appeal to you to sink all differences and to face bravely the trials that lie ahead of us. This is what the country demands from us and this is what the Congress expects us to do. If we fail in this hour of trials, the world will have a poor opinion of us but I am sure that we shall not fail. " - (A. P.)

Thursday, August, 1, 1940.

" WE CANNOT WAIT INDEFINITELY "

MAULANA'S OBSERVATION

Unity In Congress Ranks Emphasised

BOMBAY, July 31.

The view that the Congress had tried its utmost to retain Mahatma Gandhi's leadership but had failed for the present and that if the Mahatma's leadership was not available to the Congress in the next struggle, if it became necessary, the Congress should itself shoulder the responsibility of leadership was emphasised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at a press conference today.

In the opinion of the Maulana, the time factor was an important one, in regard to the decision of the Congress as to the next struggle. "We cannot sit idle," said the Maulana "nor can we wait indefinitely."

Asked if he did not regard the voting by the A.I.C.C. on the Wardha statement as a moral defeat for the Working Committee, the Congress President said that he did not regard this as a moral defeat to the Working Committee because out of a total of 182 members present, only 63 voted against the resolution while 91 voted in favour of it. 28 remained neutral. The Socialists remained neutral for their own reasons and that did not show that they were against the resolution. The Congress President did not think it obligatory on the part of those who believed in strict non-violence to leave the Congress, ~~the~~ "At a time when Mahatma Gandhi stands aloof from the Congress, the need for unity in Congress ranks is all the more essential", he emphasised.

When it was put to him, if he thought whether he still believed that communal unity was a condition precedent to the launching of a national struggle for independence, he said that the better the communal understanding, the easier it would be. But unity was not absolutely essential before the struggle was launched.

Thursday, August, 1, 1940.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad revealed that he had not yet decided the venue of the next session of the Indian National Congress. The decision might be made in the course of the next two or three days. The next Working Committee meeting might be held towards the end of August. - (A. P.)

Thursday, August, 1, 1940.

No Adulterated Non-Violence

CONGRESS POLICY

Maulana Azad on Delhi Resolution

BOMBAY, July, 31.

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, addressed to-day a meeting of local Congress workers, when he explained to the gathering the implications of the Wardha statement and Delhi resolution.

The Congress President maintained that the Wardha statement and the Delhi resolution did not imply any change in the present programme of the Congress. The preparation undertaken by the Congress Committee in the different provinces had to continue in every detail, and on the accepted non-violent principle. The Delhi resolution only meant that the Congress, at this stage, was not prepared to bind the future state to a policy of unadulterated non-violence. The President said that the present attitude of the Congress did not mean that if they found the country sufficiently non-violent they would not extend the principle of non-violence to other fields. Meanwhile if a struggle became necessary for the attainment of freedom for the country, the weapon will only be non-violence. - (A. P.)

Friday, August, 2, 1940.

GLOWING TRIBUTES TO TILAK

BOMBAY MEETING

Maulana Azad Explains Poona Decisions.

BOMBAY Aug. 1.

The Tilk anniversary celebrations in the city were rounded off with a mass meeting at the Azad Maidan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President presiding. The meeting was organised by the Bomay Provincial Congress Committee.

LIFE AND DOINGS

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad emphasised the need for people to look forward with courage and foresight , no matter what the difficulties or reverses were.

Twenty years ago, said Maulana Azad, India started her struggle for independence. Mr. Tilaks life and doings had always been a source of inspiration and guidance to those who had still been left with the task of winning India's independence.

The Congress President referred to the quickly changing events in the world and told the people that they should all be ready to take their due share in the changes that were being wrought.

The gratest event so far as the people of India particularly those in the Congress were concerned was the decision of Mahatma Gandhi for the moment to separate himself from the Congress and pursue his own policy. Mahatma Gandhi has his own mission to perform.

MAHATMA AND NON-VIOLENCE

This is a world mission and he cannot give it up simply because we who are not strong enough to reach his stature. Whatever little success we achieved during the last twenty years was achieved through Mhatma Gandhi's weapon of non-violence. We are determined to make use of this weapon in our national struggle for political freedom but at Wardha, Mhatma Gandhi wanted us to make up our minds that even when India had achieved her political independence she would use only non-violence in all spheres. We

Friday August, 2, 1940.

... individuals were fully convinced that what Mahatma Gandhi demanded was right but Mahatma Gandhi did not want our individual support but he wanted us to decide the issue as representatives of the people of India. Mahatma Gandhi demanded of us an honest reply to the question if we were prepared to depend exclusively on non-violence in all circumstances even when India was free. As honest men representing the people of India, we could not say to him that we were ready to follow him. If we did this we would have been guilty of dishonesty. We felt that in the existing conditions of society, it was not possible for free country to retain its freedom without having resort to force of arms. And we told Mahatma Gandhi so and therefore he felt it necessary to be freed from responsibility for the control and direction of Congress policy. We did this by issuing the Wardha statement which has now been approved by the All-India Congress committee . This step has meant considerable pain and heart searching to many of us but we did what we believed was the right thing to do. Even Mahatma Gandhi would not have us do otherwise until and unless we felt sure that the masses would be prepared to accept non-violence in all conditions and circumstances to meet internal disorder and external aggression. - (A. P.).

Wednesday, August, 28, 1940.

PROTESTS AGAINST VICEREGAL DECLARATION

RASTRAPATI'S INSTRUCTIONS

WARDHA, Aug. 26,

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Congress President, in an interview said that instructions had been issued to the Speakers and leaders of Congress provinces, including Assam, for holding protest meetings against the Viceregal declaration and Mr. Amery's statement and endorsing the Working Committee resolution. No instructions, on the other hand, had been issued in respect of the Punjab and Bengal as they were non-Congress provinces. Besides the members of legislatures non-Congress members who agree with the Working Committee will also be invited to participate.

Regarding the question whether Mahatma Gandhi's guidance and leadership would be available to the Congress as before, the Congress President said he had prolonged talks during the last two days on the subject and he hoped that Mahatmajī would continue to guide the Congress as before. - (A.P.)

Friday, August, 30, 1940.

" NO MEETING GROUND "

Congress President's Reply To Viceroy's
Invitation

TEXT OF CORRESPONDENCE RELEASED

Discussion Within Framework of Viceroy's
Statement "Wholly Inadequate"

The following correspondence was exchanged between His Excellency the Viceroy and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad the Congress President early this month :

Letter from H.E. the Viceroy to the Congress President :

Ootacamund,
August 4, 1940.

Dear Maulana Sahib,

You will be aware that I have in the last few weeks been in contact with various political leaders, including Mr. Gandhi, in regard to the Indian political situation. I have, I need not say, informed His Majesty's Government of the results of my discussions with the various leaders concerned; and I am glad to say that I have in the result been authorised to make the statement of which I now enclose an advance copy. That statement will appear in the morning papers of Thursday, 8th August, and I would ask that until its appearance it should be treated as for your entirely secret and personal information.

2. As you will see, I have been authorised to invite a certain number of representative Indians to join my Executive Council . I have been authorised further to establish a War Advisory Council which would meet at regular intervals and which would contain representatives of the Indian States and of other interests in the national life of India as a whole. I trust sincerely that the Indian National Congress will feel able to join with me in the Central Government and in the War Advisory Council and I should welcome it if you could let me have a very early answer on that point, if possible not later than the 21st of August.

Friday, August, 30, 1940.

3. I readily conceive that it might be convenient for you to discuss this matter further with me before you send me a formal reply on behalf of the Indian National Congress. I shall, as at present arranged, be in Poona from the 6th to 11th August, and in Bombay from the 11th to 14th August and I hope to reach Delhi on my way back to Simla on 20th August. I shall be very glad to see you and any friend whom you may care to bring with you at any of these places at any time convenient to you, would you desire to pursue the matter as I have suggested in conversation before sending me a more formal reply to this invitation. Perhaps you would be good enough to let me know whether you would see advantage in this, and if so, what date and time would be convenient to you. I would only add that I am, as you will know and understand, anxious that effect should be given with as little delay as possible to the decisions of His Majesty's Government; and that I am concerned, to announce the personnel of the expanded Executive Council by the end of August, and of the War Advisory Council at the latest by about the middle of September, but in any event with as little delay after the announcement of the personnel of the expanded Executive Council as practicable.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) Linlithgow.

M. AZAD'S REPLY

Telegram from the Congress President to H.E. the Viceroy, in reply to the letter of the Viceroy, dated Ootacamund, Aug. 4:

Calcutta,
August 8, 1940.

His Excellency Lord Linlithgow,
Viceroy's Camp.

Thanks for your Excellency's letter of August 4th and advance copy of declaration received last evening. I am thankful

Friday, August 10, 1940.

for invitation to see you. I would have readily availed of pleasure of meeting you but when His Majesty's Government had already thought fit to announce a definite line of action may I ask how far there still remains a chance of usefulness of further discussion ?

(Sd.) Abul Kalam Azad.

VICEROY'S TELEGRAM

Telegram of H.E. the Viceroy to Maulana A. K. Azad received on August 10, 1940 :

" Your telegram of 8th August, Policy of His Majesty's Government is set out in my statement and it is my hope that within its terms Indian National Congress will as indicated in my letter to you of 4th August feel able to join with me in the Central Government and in the War Advisory Council. As my letter makes clear I should be very glad to see you with any friend whom you may care to bring with you should you desire to pursue the matter in conversation before sending me a more formal reply to my invitation and if you see advantage in this I would be grateful if you would telegraph to let me know as soon as possible date and place which you suggest. My own movements remain as described in my letter to you of 4th August.

MAULANA AZAD'S REPLY

Telegram from the Congress President to the H.E. the Viceroy :

Calcutta,
August, 10. 1940.

His Excellency Lord Linlithgow,
Camp, Poona.

" Thanks for your Excellency's telegram received through Governmen House. I do not find any meeting ground for Congress in the terms of the declaration of August 8. Apart from other fundamental questions there is not even any suggestion for National Government. Under the circumstances I am unable to find any scope for further discussion. Calling Working Committee 18th to consider and decide.

(Sd.) Abul Kalam Azad".

Friday, August, 30, 1940.

MAULANA AZAD'S LETTER

Letter from the Congress President to H.E. ^{the} Viceroy:

Camp, Wardha,
August 19, 1940.

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

As I informed Your Excellency in my telegram from Calcutta of the 10th August, I convened a meeting of the Congress Working Committee for the 18th August to consider the statement made on behalf of the British Government. The Committee gave their careful consideration to this statement as well as to the amplification of it in the British Parliament.

The Working Committee will express their views in the course of the next few days dealing with this matter more fully but meanwhile, I may inform you that the Committee have read the statements embodying the British Governments' decisions and attitude in regard to India, with deep regret. These are totally at variance with the proposals last put forward by the Congress at Poona and with the objective of the Congress. The Working Committee are of opinion that they cannot associate themselves in any way with these proposals.

As I ventured to say in my telegram to you, I would have gladly availed myself of the opportunity to meet you and discuss the whole question. But your letter and your wire made it clear that the discussion is to take place within the rigid framework of your announcement which was wholly inadequate for the Congress purpose. Moreover, your letter had left it to me to decide whether I should see you before coming at a final decision. As I did not consider it necessary to trouble you about minor matters, I decided to forego the pleasure of meeting you.

I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me know if you have any objection to my releasing our correspondence to the press.

Yours sincerely,

A. K. Azad.

Wednesday, September 4, 1940

ALLEGED SUPPORT TO WAR EFFORTS

CONG. SIKH LEADER'S CASE

Maulana Azad's Statement On The Situation

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement to the Press :-

"When I was at Wardha, on the occasion of the last Working Committee meeting, I received a telegram from Sardar Sampuran Singh, Leader of the Congress Party in the Punjab Assembly, saying that he has been invited to a dinner to the Maharaja of Patiala, in which after-dinner speeches may also be delivered on the present political situation. He asked my advice whether he should participate in it or not ? I replied that his participation would not be advisable. He, therefore, informed me on August 20, that he has declined to deliver any speech at the function.

"But while returning from Wardha, I was astonished to find the following Press Report (in the "Bombay Chronicle") :

"According to talks here(Simla) the Sikh dinner at Patiala last night was intended to serve three main objects : firstly, the importance of the Sikh community during war; secondly, unity of Sikh parties behind Patiala's leadership and demand for Patiala Maharaja's membership on the War Advisory Council, and thirdly, inclusion of a Sikh in the enlarged Executive Council. Master Tara Singh, Akali leader, Gyani Kartar Singh, and Sampuran Singh, Leader of the Congress Party in the Punjab Assembly, participated and showed their support to the three demands. The Sikh leaders are prepared for a ~~Panel~~ for election of an Executive Councilor from among

ednesday, Sept. 4, 1940

them to be forwarded to the Viceroy. This includes Sir Jogendra Singh, Sant Singh, M.L.A. (Central) and Sampuran Singh. Two others, Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh (of Round Table Conference) and Sir Datar Singh of Indo-British trade negotiations are also trying their luck."

No sooner had I reached Calcutta, then I asked him (Sardar Sampuran Singh) telegraphically the truth or otherwise of the report, as I could not believe that he, being a responsible member of the Congress Party, could associate himself with any demand based on the declaration rejected by the Congress.

In reply to the above telegram, Sardar Sampuran Singh wired to me saying that the Press report was wrong and that he had no association with these demands. Now I am writing to him to fully clarify the situation by a detailed statement to the Press.

The above mentioned Press report also mentions Master Tara Singh in this connection. Master Sahib is a member of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, and a member of the All India Congress Committee as well. I have written to the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee to inquire into the matter and apprise me of the situation.

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Monday, Sept. 9, 1940

RASTRAPATI FORECASTS A DEFINITE DECISION AT
THE FORTHCOMING A.I.C.C. MEETING

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Allahabad, Sept. 8.

RASTRAPATI AZAD

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressing the meeting said, "we have to take our decision and march on. We have reached the limit. The final word is to go round. The A.I.C.C. is meeting in Bombay and it will take the final decision. I am only echoing your hearts' voice when I say that you will to one man—every Indian Congressman or not — follow that decision."

The Maulana referring to the Poona resolution said that he himself had a great hand in it and they had pressed for a national government at the Centre to test Britain's sincerity to transfer power to Indians. But the only response was the extension of the Viceroy's Executive Council and an emphasis on internal differences. The Moulana said that the Congress always recognised internal differences but held that they were a necessary corollary of foreign rule and should be solved privately by ourselves. The desire of the British Government seemed to be to perpetuate these differences. (A.P.)

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Tuesday, Sept. 10, 1940

T A S K A H E A D O F S T U D E N T S

COMING STRUGGLE

and Pandit Nehru
Rastrapati, Speak at Allahabad

Allahabad, Sept. 9

"As far as the ordinary normal political routine of the country goes, you as students are not concerned with it and must devote your time to ~~of~~ studies, but there are abnormal times in the political life of a country when it is a matter of life and death, and of self-respect. In such times you have to answer the call of the country. That day for India has come", said Maulana Azad, Congress President, replying to an address presented to him on behalf of the Allahabad University Union.

Moulana Azad exhorted the students not to be carried away by the superficial enthusiasm of the moment but to learn to go deeper into the realities of the problems and to take a well-considered and well-balanced decision. — (A.P.)

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WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16, 1940

Bombay, Sept 15

GANDHIJI'S ACCEPTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

Amidst loud cheers Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, announced to the A.I.C.C. that Mahatma Gandhi had once again agreed to take up active leadership of the Congress. Maulana Azad then made a long statement reviewing the developments since the Poona Session of the All-India Congress Committee and declared that what had happened during the last six weeks had made it necessary for the Congress to withdraw the Poona offer and revert back to the Ramgarh resolutions which had appointed Mahatma Gandhi as the generalissimo of the Indian National Congress.

Maulana Azad said during the ^{last} ~~lat~~ six weeks after their last meeting at Poona in July events ^{had} ~~have~~ moved rapidly. Our country cannot remain unaffected by such events. We must look at these events against the background of our own fight for our freedom. We have had to decide whether we would march fast or move slowly. Decision we have arrived at to-day is result of careful consideration and review of events that have taken place during the last eight months. We had taken decision at Delhi in first week of July and confirmed it at Poona. We then thought that it would prove final but events during last six weeks have proved otherwise. Proceeding, the Congress President said that he had envisaged such possibilities as he felt convinced that struggle was inevitable. He had made this clear in his first statement after his election as president, Ramgarh Congress. As days passed on and events moved fast new problems arose but at every stage I kept Mahatma Gandhi informed of my reactions. I did this because I was convinced that any struggle we may have to start will have to be led by

Monday, Sept., 16, 1940

Mahatma Gandhi. Till the end of June I was of opinion that we should take forward step without losing time. But sudden turn in war situation made me revise my opinion and we decided that we should give British Government another ~~chance~~ to revise their policy regarding India. This naturally led to Delhi resolution as confirmed by Poona meeting of All India Congress Committee. Then some members had criticised us as being anxious to compromise with British Government on main issue and thus avoid trouble but those friends had proved false prophets. This was evident from resolution which Pt. Jawaharlal would move immediately. ^{It} ~~In~~ may be of interest to members to know that the very people, particularly Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, who were responsible for Poona decision were first to-day to scrap that decision. The offer Britain has made through Viceroy is not even worth looking at. Events of last few days made us decide whether we should not in light ^{of} fresh events request Mahatma Gandhi to assure once again active leadership of Congress and I am glad to tell you that Mahatma Gandhi has agreed to do this because there is no difference whatsoever between him and Working Committee (cheers). We therefore come back to Ramgarh resolution. (A.P.).

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Tuesday, Sept. 17, 1940

MAHATMA GANDHI

TO SEEK INTERVIEW WITH THE VICEROY

BOMBAY, Sept. 16

^{Maulana}
~~Mahatma~~ Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, said that Gandhiji would write to His Excellency the Viceroy asking for an interview to discuss the specific issue of free expression of opinion against participation in the war to-day or to-morrow.

It is expected an interview between the Viceroy and Gandhiji would take place at an early date after which another meeting of the Congress Working Committee would be called at Wardha to consider the Viceroy's reply.

When asked what did he expect to be the outcome of the interview, Maulana Azad smiled and said :

"Personally I am in doubt about the outcome but Gandhiji has his own technique about things and I wish Mahatma Gandhi all success."

The Congress President added : "For the first time for many months I had restful sleep last night. Mahatmaj^{ji} is now back at the ~~help~~ ^{h.c.m} and I am sure we will march behind him to victory."

The "United Press" learns to-day being Gandhiji's silence day, the Congress Working Committee will meet to-morrow morning.

Asked if the ban on the attendance of the Central Legislative Assembly session would be lifted the Maulana Sahib said, "Personally I am in favour of lifting the ban. But much depends upon what happens between now and November 5. In any case, we will consider the matter to-morrow." - (U.P.)

Tuesday, Sept. 17, 1940

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE DEFERRED

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Bombay, Sept. 16.

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Winding up the proceedings of the A.I.C.C. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President, said that a historic session of the All-India Congress Committee was just going to conclude. In view of the several speeches made in relation to the Poona decision of the A.I.C.C. he felt obliged to refer to them. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari had been made the target of criticism with regard to the Poona resolution. He was pained at the rather unfair remarks made. He had no hesitation in pointing out that he, as the President of the Congress, shared the full responsibility for the Poona offer. He assented to the passage of that resolution and if he was against it, he would not have hesitated to resign his presidentship. He was for that resolution and encouraged it and strove to create a proper atmosphere for its discussion. While he had shouldered that much of responsibility in regard to that offer, he could not now let a colleague of his share all the blame, if blame it was.

Proceeding, the Maulan Saheb said that the Poona offer had really strengthened the Congress. The Congress had made its stand quite clear and so the British Government had theirs. The situation had been clarified and the Congress was now at liberty to go its own way. It was the Poona offer that brought forth the British Government's reply to India's demand. Now India had been told that the British Government would not ^{part} ~~pass~~ with any power. The Congress had been relieved to a great extent and released from its self-imposed restraint. To-day India's path was quite clear. A chance was given to the British and they had not availed of it. There would be no more parleys with the

uesday, Sept. 17, 1940

Government and the Congress would strive to achieve its goal. He appealed to all members to close up their ranks and stand united behind Mahatma Gandhi, who had assumed the leadership of the Congress.-(A.P.)

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Friday, Sept. 20, 1940

PATIALA DINNER AND CONGRESS SIKHS

INCORRECT REPORT

Maulana Azad Satisfied With Assurances

Bombay, Sept. 19

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement :

"As many enquiries had been addressed to me about the attendance of some Congressmen at a dinner held recently in honour of the Maharaja of Patiala, I released to the press from Calcutta the text of some telegrams which had passed between me and Sardar Sampuran Singh. Since then I have received further communications and explanation from him, and I have also had a long talk with him here in Bombay. Sardar Saheb has assured me that the press report about this dinner was wholly incorrect and completely wrong in so far as he and other Congressmen present were concerned. The dinner was a Sikh social function and they had attended it as such. There were no political objects attached to it, although some speakers referred to political matters. No Congressmen^a delivered any speech on the occasion or associated himself in any way with the so-called objects mentioned in the Press. In particular, Sardar Saheb has assured me that there was no question of their agreeing to or wanting the leadership of the Maharaja of Patiala for the Sikh community, or of asking for the inclusion of a Sikh in the proposed enlarged Executive Council of the Viceroy, or of Sikh leaders giving a panel for the purpose, or of asking for representation in the proposed War Advisory Council. Sardar Sampuran Singh further assured me that Xhe followed the policy and programme of the Congress and could not possibly have associated himself with any objectives which were opposed to this policy and programme. I am glad to

Friday, Sept, 20, 1940

receive the explanations and assurances from the Sardar Saheb and to pass them on to the Press so that any misapprehensions created by incorrect Press reports may be removed.

I would add that in view of the new and grave step taken by the A.I.C.C. which is likely to lead in the near future to serious and far-reaching consequences, it is all the more imperative now for all Congressmen and especially those in responsible positions in the organisation to adhere strictly to the Congress policy and programme." - (A.P.)

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Monday, Sept. 23, 1940

A. I. C. C. D E C I S I O N E X P L A I N E D

Conference Of Bengal Congress Workers.

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD'S ADDRESS

Meeting Called For To-day To Chalk Out Programme
Of Work In the Districts

The significance of the resolution adopted by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay was explained by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, addressing a conference of Congress workers of the province at the office of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee on Sunday evening.

The Maulana Saheb prefaced his speech with a tribute to the service and sacrific^ces of Bengalee Nationalist leaders of the past several generations who had kindled fire not only in the hearts of the Bengalees but of Indians as a whole. He regretted that Bengal, which had once occupied an enviable place in Indian politics, had to-day been relegated to a position which they could not think of. It was a pity, he said, that the main feature of the political life in the province nowadays was hankering for leadership, leadership in parliamentary affairs, leadership in Congress affairs of the province, and leadership in civic affairs. This made them unmindful of their real objective. He advised Bengal Congressmen to work earnestly for the achievement of the Congress ideal, forgetting all their petty party squabbles, jealousies and rivalries and thereby raise the status of their province to her former place.

Referring to the decision taken by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay, the Maulana Saheb said that a year ago the Congress had thought whether it should take part in the war. The Congress informed the British Government that they were not prepared to sacrifice men and money of the country

Monday, Sept. 23, 1940

for the war, except at the expressed will of the Indian people. This was followed by the resignation of the eight Provincial Congress Ministries. The Congress raised the further question regarding the aims and objects of the present war, namely whether the British were fighting for safeguarding the freedom and democracy of the nations of the world, and if so how far these principles would be applied in the case of India. In their Poona resolution, the Congress asked if it could take power into their own hands in time of chaos and disorder. The resolution adopted by the Congress on July 3 at Delhi was based on complete Independence. It wanted a clear declaration of freedom and for the time being the formation of a National Government at the Centre~~X~~, with men selected from the Central Legislature. This was the least that the Congress could demand. For the British nothing but a National Government could suit their interests better. He reminded the audience that the Viceroy was ready to enlarge the Executive Council with four or five more members even in October last year. But the Congress wanted first a declaration about the Independence of the country before taking up the question of enlarging the Central Executive. The Poona resolution could not and did not leave any grounds for doubt. The question of parties could not be raised. A National Government could not be formed with one party-alone - it must be a composition of several parties.

The Poona, resolution, continued the President having been rejected the Congress reverted to its attitude adopted at Ramgarh.

DOUBLE-EDGED RESOLUTION

Continuing the Maulana Saheb said that to-day the issue was not one of civil liberties, or even of freedom, but it was the war issue. The Bombay resolution stated that India was dragged into the war without her

Monday, Sept. 23, 1940

consent and against her will. He reminded the audience about the move of Mahatma Gandhi, which he described as Mahatma's special method. Even if Gandhiji had decided to begin a fight to-day, he would go up to the Viceroy to see if there was any way out of it. Gandhiji would be seeing the Viceroy sometime this week.

The Bombay resolution, the Congress President said was double-edged. If the Government recognised the right of the Congress to decide whether Indians should take part in the war, it meant certain concessions of power to the people of the country in ~~decided~~ ^{deciding} their own affairs. If, however, they did not, then this refusal on the part of the Government would be made the issue for a new struggle.

People could not and should not think that Gandhiji would talk about a compromise with the British Government at this stage. The position of Gandhiji within the Congress was rather peculiar. Supposing the British Government changed its attitude towards India and met all her demands, could Gandhiji with his creed of non-violence call a single man to take part in the war ?

They had to fight for the self-respect of India at this hour of India's trial.

Concluding, the Maulana Sahab urged Bengal Congress workers to formulate a plan of work for the next six months. If to-day's conference was not enough he would advise them to stay on in the city for a day or two in order to arrive at a working position, so that they might carry the message of the Congress to the farthest corner of the province and thus strengthen the organisation. He also expressed his desire to meet and hear from the representatives of the workers and other Congressmen in the province what they thought and felt within themselves.

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Wednes., Oct 2, 1940

I N D I A ' S A T T I T U D E

MAULANA AZAD DEMANDS RIGHT OF FREE EXPRESSION

"I admit that the outcome of the Simla meeting is not contrary to expectations. The very presence of the British Government in India indicates one reality, from whatever angle we see : The denial of freewill of India. Naturally therefore, we cannot expect her to tolerate free expression of our decision about war even if it be of a purely non-violent nature," says the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview with the 'Associated Press' on the outcome of the latest meeting between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi.

The Maulana Saheb adds:

"India has been dragged into the war without being given the least chance to express her opinion about it. For the last thirteen months, we have been constantly trying that India may be allowed to co-operate in the war rather than be forced to become an unwilling partner. This, however proved to be of no avail. We came up to Poona offer from the Ramgarh decision, but that too was rejected. The only honourable course now left for us, is to proclaim our decision about the war. I would borrow the historic words of Mahatma Gandhi, and say "if Congress has to die, it should do so in the act of proclaiming the right of self-determination for India."

"I am simply astonished to find reference to the law applied to pacifistsⁱⁿ in England in the letter of H.E. the Viceroy to Gandhiji. What a strange analogy to the present Indian situation ! The Indian National Congress is not a pacifists' society, it is a political organisation struggling definite political objective."

"I am consulting Gandhiji when to call the Working Committee I shall make an announcement about it very soon" - (A.P.)

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Friday, Oct. 4, 1940

GANDHI JAYANTI CELEBRATION

CALCUTTA FUNCTION

Congress President on Bombay Resolution

Advice to put implicit faith in the lead of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee was given by Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Indian National Congress, when he addressed a large gathering yesterday evening at the Maheswari Bhawan (Sobharam Basak Street).

The meeting was held in connection with the celebration of Gandhi Jayanti by the Burrabazar District Congress Committee.

Among those present were Sjts. Surendra Mohan Ghosh and Arun Chandra Guha, President and Secretary respectively of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

Extending a hearty welcome to Moulana Abul Kalam Azad Pt. Jewan Lal referred to Moulana Azad's service and sacrifice in the cause of the country.

In course of his address, Moulana Azad said that he was very glad to find such a large gathering of Congress Workers and also sympathisers of the Congress. He hoped that they all fully appreciated the significance of the Bombay resolution. Every one knew how India's men and money were being utilized for fighting Britain's imperialistic war without the consent ~~without~~ of the Indians. Congress had expressed strong disapproval of the policy. Britain was clearly told that India could be party to such a war only on the condition that she should be recognised as a free nation. The resolution ^{passed} ~~passes~~ by the Working Committee at Delhi showed how they were ready to offer their help for the prosecution of the war in a manner consistent with the self-respect of India. The demand of the Congress was quite a modest one and was

riday, Oct. 4, 1940

~~and~~ was embodied in the Poona resolution. But they all knew how the demand of the Congress was rejected and when the ~~h~~istory of this episode would come to be written, it would show how unsympathetic British policy towards India had always been.

Proceeding Maulana Azad said that the only way in which they could attain their objective was by placing implicit faith in their leader Mahatma Gandhi. They should always keep themselves in readiness so that when the call for action come they might not be found wanting.

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Saturday, Oct. 12, 1940

CONGRESS CABINET MEETS

No Going Back On Bombay Decision

WARDHAGANJ, Oct. 11

The Congress Working Committee held a five and a half hours' sitting to-day and adjourned at half past seven in the evening to meet again at eight A.M. to-morrow.

"There is no question of going back on the Bombay decision. We march ahead towards a struggle, but ^{what} we are considering is the manner and method of fight," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Pressmen regarding the subject to be discussed at the present session of the Congress Working Committee.

Asked when everything has been left to Gandhiji, why there have been prolonged discussions, the Maulane said "quite so, but Gandhiji wants to carry the whole Working Committee with him."

It is understood that Gandhiji has not yet "perfected his plans for Congress campaign but according to Maulana Azad Mahatmaji has got it all ready in his brains and we will all know it this afternoon.

SPECULATION ABOUT NEXT STEP

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, told the 'Associated Press' that the Working Committee had a general discussion on the political situation. Many members including Mahatma Gandhi participated in the discussion, Mahatma Gandhi having explained in detail what transpired at his recent interview with the Viceroy at Simla.

Asked what direction the Committee would give to Congressmen as a result of this meeting Maulane Abul Kalam Azad said, "There is no question of going back on the Bombay resolution of the All India Congress

Saturday, Oct. 12, 1940

Committee . We are determined to implement that resolution. We have to hear all view points on the question before we come to any final decision on the matter and therefore we shall continue the general discussion tomorrow and if necessary the day after to-morrow."

..... (U.P.)

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Wednes. Nov. 13, 1940.

MAULANA AZAD'S EFFORTS

SIND SITUATION

Negotiations With Party Leaders

KARACHI, Nov. 12.

Maulana Azad, Congress President, met members of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee and members of the Congress Assembly Party this morning and exchanged views with them on the situation in Sind. The meeting lasted for two hours and several members expressed their individual views.

The meeting was resumed in the afternoon following the Maulana's discussion with the Jamiat-Ul-Ulema at noon.

Two hour talks with Congress Assembly members and the Congress Provincial Executive and later with Jami-at-Ul-Ulemas and Nationalist Muslims to-day marked the beginning of the study of the Sind situation undertaken by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President. These will be followed to-morrow by discussions with Ministers, including Mr. G. M. Syed and Sheikh Abul Majid for acquainting himself with the point of view of Hindus represented by a deputation of the Federation of Hindu punchayats.

Deputationists of Ulemas, who waited on the Congress President this afternoon, included prominent Moulvies, Nationalist Muslim M.L.A.s, Mohd. Ali Shahn Amin Khoso and Kaisul Buxuner. The deputationists, while offering fullest co-operation for improving the situation held that the situation had been brought about by communal propaganda and blamed the Muslim League. They alleged that Congress could not escape responsibility as they were said to have joined the forces of the Hindu Sabha and installed the Muslim League in power. They urged the need for bringing the Muslim masses nearer to the Congress and suggested the Congress High Command to make serious efforts in this direction. They opined that in order to eradicate communalism it was necessary that nationalist Muslims co-operated with Congressmen to carry on intensive propaganda in

Wednes. Nov. 13, 1940.

in villages and expressed readiness on their part to send out a hundred Moulvis on a peace mission. After a frank discussion, Maulana Azad, it is understood suggested that Jamiat-Ul-Ulemas could not be free from the share of responsibility inas much as they had done nothing so far either to improve the situation or bring Muslims nearer the Congress.

"A full and frank discussion took place in course of which the past was scanned and the attitude of various parties in the Sind Assembly including the Congress, the League and the Hindu was reviewed", said a Congress leader to the "United Press" after the joint meeting of the Council of Sind Provincial Congress Committee and the Congress Assembly Party had a two hour discussion with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The Congress President, it is understood, in his opening address said that he had left all pressing problems behind and dashed to Sind because he lost his peace of mind due to the situation created in Sind. He would lend a patient hearing to all to grasp the real position before reaching the conclusions. He, however, hoped that experience gained by Congressmen in the past would be helpful in shaping the future of Sind.

Maulana Azad addressed the public meeting this evening.

"I said to myself that I must pay a visit to Sind. I therefore decided to hold back all pressing engagements that vitally concern our country and undertook the journey to Karachi. I shall succeed in my mission," thus observed Maulana Abul Kalam in course of talk to the visitors at the residence of Lalji Mehrotra, Mayor of Karachi, with whom he is staying. The Congress President thanked Sir Ghulam Hussain and Mir. Bundeali for their kind invitations to stay with them. He dined to-night with Sir Ghulam Hussain and dines on Wednesday with Mr. Bundeali of Talpur. - (A.P. & U.P.).

Thursday Nov. 21, 1940.

NEW MINISTRY FOR SIND

' Everything Finally Settled '

A SIGH OF RELIEF

Rastrapati Complete A Great Task

KARACHI, Nov. 20.

"Everything has been finally settled and I am now engaged in drafting the programme of the new Ministry," observed Moulana Azad, Congress President, interviewed by the "Associated Press" this evening. The Moulana added " I concluded my talks with all those concerns who have assured me that they will abide by my decision".

Continuing the Congress President said, "it has been decided that there should be no expansion of the Ministry. The selection of the personnel of the Ministry has also been made and by the time I am ready with a statement to-morrow I expect the new Ministry will have been sworn in at Government House". - (A.P.).

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Sunday November 24, 1940.

SIND TANGLE ENDS

Rastrapati's Efforts Crowned With Success

BOARD FORMED TO PROMOTE GOODWILL

Provincial Congress Directed To Wholly Abstain
From Satyagraha Movement

KARACHI, Nov. 23.

" On the eve of my departure from Sind, I am in a position to announce with the fullest satisfaction that I have succeeded in my efforts and I am leaving with the belief that a Stable Ministry has been established here which has the backing of all parties in the Sind legislature," observes Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in the course of his statement. ^{The} ~~His~~ Maulana adds, "I am satisfied that nothing better is possible under the existing circumstances in Sind. I received all round co-operation. Both the Moslem groups in the Assembly unanimously responded to my appeal for unity and all the four Muslim Ministers were at one with the decision of the Muslim members of the Assembly to respond to my appeal for unity. My success would have become doubtful had not the Hindu party in the Assembly helped me with the fullest confidence. This party was prepared to support any Ministry which would establish law and order in the province with a firm hand. It went still further and was prepared to leave the administration of the province to the goodwill of Muslim Ministers only, without there being a Hindu Minister on the Cabinet. I admit this spirit is nothing but praiseworthy but no single group of Muslim members of the Assembly was prepared to work without Hindu colleagues. I too did not consider it to be in any way conducive to the best interests of the province that Hindu members should not participate in the Cabinet. I am glad that the Hindu ^{party} ~~party~~ has accepted my advice and let its representatives remain on the Cabinet and the ^{party} ~~party~~ sincerely helped me in the achievement of the common object."

Sunday November, 24, 1940.

Turning to the Congress members of the Assembly the Congress President says :

"Just at a time when I was expecting all Congress legislators to find themselves behind prison bars as soon as possible, the situation in Sind engaged me in an activity of the opposite nature. I shouldered this responsibility with my own choice and it was my duty not to shirk it under its special circumstances. I have to admit that it is impossible to tread two contradictory paths one and the same time. Therefore if we were forced by the prevailing circumstances in Sind to participate in the formation of a provincial Government it is necessary that we remain in the Assembly and not grudge support to the Cabinet as far as possible. I have directed both Sind Assembly member-s and members of the A.I.C.C. from Sind to abstain from civil disobedience. Congress members of the Assembly will confine themselves only to constructive criticism and at the same time strain every nerve to consolidate the present Ministry. Outside the Assembly the work of the provincial Congress Committee will be mainly devoted to constructive programme, specially, Hindu-Muslim unity."

Maulana Azad prefaced his lengthy statement with the following observation :-

" It is a matter of common knowledge that the root cause of the Ministerial tangle here was the outcome of mutual difference and rivalry between the Allah Baksh group of Muslim Assembly members and the other Muslim group in the Assembly. "

Maulana Azad said : " On arrival at Karachi, I found there were three lines of action open to me; first, the ministry might be formed on an all party basis, secondly the present ministry might be dissolved and a new single party ministry formed and the third, so far as the Congress party was concerned it might resign from the Assembly and all its responsibilities might come to end under the present circumstances. "

Sunday, November 24, 1940.

Continuing he said " I studied all aspect of the problem and every link in the chain of reasoning led me to conclude that the first and fundamental need for the welfare of Sind lay in establishment of a stable Government. I also concluded such Governem~~nt~~ could not be established unless two~~o~~ conditions were fulfilled, first, the group laid by Khan Bhadur Allah Bux joined ministry; secondly, the Congress party was prepared to help it. No other method could solve the existing tangle in Sind. Such a structure could only be on and all party basis. I therefore, decided to exert all my energies to achieve the abovementioned object, which I did achieve. - (A. P.)

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Tuesday, Nove, 26, 1940.

MAULANA AZAD BACK TO KARACHI

Chalking Out Programme For Ministry

ADDRESSES PUBLIC MEETING

KARACHI, Nov. 25.

Maulana Azad addressed a public meeting in Rambaugh. Maulana Azad reviewed briefly his talks with various Hindu and Muslim parties in the Sind Assembly leading to the ministerial reshuffling. The ministerial reshuffling, the Maulana said, was the first step towards a solution of the Sind problem. The major work was to be done outside the Assembly. He appealed for restoration of Hindu Muslim unity. He also observed that Congressmen in Sind will not ^{launch} ~~have~~ satyagraha. The first and foremost duty of Sind Congressmen was to work for achieving communal unity. The Maulana announced the constitution of committee of twelve members with Mr. Jamshed Mehta as Chairman which would work for restoration of communal harmony in this province.

The Congress President was presented with a purse of Rs. 10,000 on behalf of the citizens of Karachi which he handed over to this committee for propaganda for communal unity.

Concluding Maulana Azad said, "The welfare of Sind lies in forgetting the past and the Hindus and Muslims in living together as brothers. I am leaving Sind confident of peace and harmony reigning over the province." ... - (U. P.)

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Monday, Dec. 2, 1940.

SINCERITY THAT COUNTS

SATYGRAHA MOVEMENT

Maulana Azad's Address At Wardha Meeting

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SUNDAY, Dec. 1.

"It is not number that counts this time but the intensity, sincerity and earnestness of representative Satyagrahis who were elected by about fifty lakhs of Congress members and some crores of Indian voters under the Government of India Act of 1935," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressing a public meeting at Wardha presided by Seth Jammalal Bajaj.

He added " This proves that several crores of Indians are behind this movement and so this movement will have far-reaching consequences on India and the world . In all our movements our objective is one and they will continue till it (Swarai) is won."

Continuing Maulana Azad regretted the Patna incident when Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha offered Satyagraha and said the Government should have known the mob's or peoples' demonstrative mentality but that does not "absolve us as we should be perfectly unperturbed and non-violent when Satyagraha is being offered and wait for our turn by following Mahatma Gandhi's programme."

He added, " I have some Bengal, U.P. and Bihar matters for disposal after which I shall join my colleagues in jail . I could not do so long as I was preoccupied in Sind matters where, I hope, peace will rule. " ... (U. P.).

Saturday, December 14, 1940.

4-ANNA CONGRESS MEMBERS TO BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE

NEXT FORM OF SATYAGRAHA

ALLAHABAD, Dec. 13.

Addressing a public meeting this evening Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that after the present form of Satyagraha had spread right down to the village mandal, the next step would be that all four-anna members of the Congress who undertook to follow the conditions laid down by Mahatma Gandhi and who sent their names to be approved would be allowed to offer Satyagraha. He said that even non-Congressmen, who made the Congress question their own would be allowed to offer Satyagraha provided they sent their names for approval and undertook to follow the conditions and instructions laid down by Mahatma Gandhi. This was necessary for the sake of discipline, unity and concerted action.

Maulana Azad laid special emphasis on discipline and tolerance. He explained what freedom of speech meant with special reference to Satyagraha.

Maulana Azad is not leaving for Calcutta to-night. He hopes to finish his work at Allahabad by to-morrow. Mr. Tandon met Maulana Azad at Anand Bhawan to-day. - (A.P.).

Monday, December, 23, 1940.

A STEP TOWARDS DISCIPLINE

PLYING OF CHARKHA

Maulana Azad's Address At Satyanarayan Park

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The significance and implications of the charkha were explained by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, addressing a meeting at Satyanarayan Park in Burrabazar area on Sunday afternoon. The meeting was organised by the Burrabazar Charka Prachar, Samity who held a spinning demonstration in the Park in which about a hundred and fifty persons, including women, participated.

The plying of charkha came within the constructive programme of the Congress, observed the Congress President. It was needless to explain why charkha had been included in the programme, because Mhatma Gandhi has explained it more than once. However, explaining a few words the Maulana said that the charkha was a link between the constructive and the political programmes of the Congress. The plying of the charkha was the first step towards discipline.

So long as the workers fighting for the cause of the country were not disciplined under the command of a general, they could not achieve the object they aspired for. The Congress did not want to achieve their end on the strength of the sword or armaments; they strove to seek their realisation through the power of the spirit and the soul, and therefore, they did not harbour any ill-will against any person or any country. He implored the audience to take to the charkha, because, he was of the opinion that by so doing they would be doing a direct service to the mother country and thus help the poverty-stricken millions. Millions of their peasants had not sufficient work to do and they had not sufficient to clothe themselves by mill made clothes. Nor could the millions in this land hope to be benefited by the industrial development of the country since that sphere was closed to them on account of capitalists and profiteers. Could they not, asked the Congress President, give an hour each day to the charkha,

Monday, December, 23, 1940.

... the safest way of serving the country.

Speaking on the present political situation in the country the Maulana Saheb referred to imprisonment of Congress leaders in the various provinces. He observed that the present movement had commenced from the top because the top had the most representative value. Slowly but steadily it would spread to the different Congress organisations and then every four-anna member of the Congress would be asked to participate in it. It would then gain in volume and strength.

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Thursday, December 26, 1940.

Speeding Up Of Satyagraha

FROM JAN. 6

Congress President On Future Developments

"There is nothing new" was the reply of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, regarding the Viceroy's recent speech at the Associated Chambers of Commerce and the letter of certain British M. P.'s in course of an interview to the "United Press" just on the eve of his departure for Lahore on Wednesday evening.

Maulana Azad added : "Since Ramgarh the Congress has travelled a long way to Poona offering co-operation on honourable terms and the Congress waited^{and waited} in the hope that the Government would see wisdom in accepting the elementary demands of the nation. But nothing better than the Viceroy's old offer of August last is being repeated. Only the words are sweeter. Congress sees nothing in these speeches to reconsider its present course of action."

Asked about the future development of the Satyagraha movement, Maulana Azad said that the movement would be speeded up from the sixth January onward when it was likely that Congressmen down to the primary might be allowed to offer Satyagraha. He further said that Mahatmaji might even allow non-Congressmen to offer Satyagraha if they should fulfil the condition laid down by him and remain bound by the congress pledge. He also told that some such list were already with Gandhiji now under his consideration. He added however that even if Satyagraha be expanded the individual character of the movement would be maintained.

His attention being drawn to the situation arising out of non-arrest of Satyagrahis in Calcutta and the Frontier Province the Maulana said that he was also thinking of the question and probably on coming back to Calcutta he would arrange for holding public meetings daily in the city.

Thursday, December 26, 1940.

Asked when he would offer Satyagraha, the Maulana very jovially told the 'United Press' that he would be doing so probably by the middle of January.

As at present arranged Maulana Azad will stay at Lahore for two days from where he will go to Lucknow for a day. From Lucknow he will proceed to Wardha to meet Gandhiji and discuss with him the situation in the Punjab.

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Saturday, December 28, 1940.

MAULANA AZAD IN LAHORE

ADDRESSES A MEETING

Significance of Non-violent Struggle
Explained

LAHORE, Dec. 27.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressed for 40 minutes a meeting of about 700 Congressmen who had specially arrived from different parts of the province. Several Punjab Congressmen expressed their views on the question of "Non-violence".

The meeting which commenced at 3 P.M. had not concluded at 6-30P.M.

He stressed the need of complete faith in non-violence for the attainment of Swaraj. He explained in detail the significance of the non-violent struggle launched by Gandhiji. Mahatmaji, he stated had requested him to ascertain by personal visit whether the allegation that a large number of Congressmen in the Punjab did not believe in non-violence was true. He therefore, wanted them to speak out their mind openly without any mental reservation on the question so that Gandhiji might not be misled and be able to decide the future course of satyagraha.

Maulana Azad told Press representatives that an official statement would be issued to-morrow.

It is understood that the Congress President has extended his stay in Lahore till Sunday. He has not yet come to any decision regarding the proposal to visit the Frontier.

" REPORT INCORRECT "

In a statement to the Press the Congress President says:
"My attention has been drawn to a Press report from Delhi which says that I addressed the persons who had assembled at the Delhi railway station last night and in the end of the speech raised anti-war slogans. The report is incorrect. I am not used to raise slogans within or after a speech. I consider it to be a bad taste on the part of ^a speaker. Whatever I said was not an anti-war slogan. It was nearly an explanation of the anti-war

Saturday, December, 28, 1940.

resolution of the Congress. Those who have been listening to my speeches in the last six or seven months know that I always mention Congress resolutions about the war."

✓ Rousing reception was accorded to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, by a large number of Congressmen and Ahrar workers on arrival this morning. Shouts of "Azad Zindabad" rent the air as the train streamed in when Congress volunteers formed the guard of honour having presented the salute amid thunderous cheering. The Maulana drove to Mian Iftakharuddin's residence where he is staying as the guest of the Begum Saheba. ✓ - (A.P.) & (U.P.)

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Tuesday, December 31, 1940.

THE CONGRESS PRESIDENT

To Offer Satyagraha After January 10

...

LAHORE, Dec. 30.

That the Congress President would offer Satyagraha after January 10 when he would be free from all responsibilities regarding Provincial matters, was revealed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in course of his talks to pressmen before his departure for Delhi this evening. The Maulana also maintained that non-violence would be the only worthy effort still, as even if Hindustan was in danger to-morrow, there would be no other means to save her.

Referring to his mission Maulana Azad said it was successful and he was going with the idea that the Punjab would not be behind any province in the satyagraha movement. He in a conference of Congressmen on the 29th told the Akalis that none could join the Congress with communal ideas. There can be no representation in the Congress on behalf of any community. They must join as individuals having faith in the Congress programme and pledge.

Maulana Azad added that he sent telegrams to Sind ministers inviting them to read the latest developments in Sind and he himself hoped that his arrangement regarding an all-party government were still undisturbed. - (United Press).

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Friday, Jan. 3, 1941.

Congress & Sj. Subhas Bose

MAULANA AZAD'S OFFER

Will Welcome Him If He Regrets His Action

NEW DELHI Jan. 2.

" The Congress will always welcome Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose to come to the Congress fold, provided he regrets his past activities in respect of the breach of the Congress discipline," observed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, prior to his leaving for Allahabad this evening.

Maulana Azad added : All members of the Forward Block and other parties who wanted to offer Satyagraha would be required to comply with the Congress discipline and the conditions laid down by ~~xxx~~ Gandhiji.

Regarding the Frontier Province and Calcutta where Government did not arrest Satyagrahis Maulana Azad stated that from January 6 arrangements would be made throughout the Frontier Province and different parts of Calcutta to hold meetings where the Congress stand would be explained to the public. - (U.P.)

....

Saturday, Jan. 3, 1942.

CONGRESS ATTITUDE TO WAR

" Nothing Has Warranted A Change "

M. AZAD EXPLAINS BARDOLI DECISIONS

Difference With Mahatma Gandhi On
Non-Vilence Issue

...

BOMBAY, Jan. 2.

The Congress President was explaining the decisions arrived at the Bardoli meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

NO PREDICTION AS TO NEXT STEP

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The Congress President added:

" The fact that two resolutions, namely, one relating to non-vilence and, the other about the attitude of the Congress in regard to the political situation came simultaneously before the public had given ~~to~~ rise to some misunderstanding. I want to clear this.

" Before proceeding to Bardoli, I had not the least idea that once again the question of non-violence and violence would come before us. This question was based by some friends but I did not like it as in my opinion there was no scope for raising this question at all. But I was very much surprised to find that when Gandhiji first addressed the meeting of the Working Committee, he raised the question and said, that the speech I made in Bombay and the short statement that I issued on my release from jail went against the spirit of the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay in September, 1940. You might remember that I had emphasised the fact that it was the attitude of the British Government which was responsible for our decision about the war and unless she changed no question of change came before us, Gandhiji thought that this was not in line with the Bombay resolution.

He also felt that the statement given by Pandit Nehru to the "News Chronicle" was also against the spirit of the Bombay

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resolution. It was quite clear to me that in the Bombay resolution the Congress had taken up the position that it would not participate in this war, because of political considerations. It was not because of non-violence. However, the interpretation now put by Gandhiji took us back to the same controversy which was raised on June 3, 1940 at Wardha. I told Gandhiji that I felt it was the first time that the Bombay resolution was being interpreted in that manner to us.

"Then I invited every member of the Working Committee to express his opinion. Last time when this question was discussed at Wardha there was a section in the Working Committee who were ready to go whole hog with Gandhiji. I invited these friends to express their opinions first. They all said apart from the question of violence or non-violence the Bombay resolution was based on political grounds only. There was only one member out of the 14 who were present who held a different view. The Bombay resolution was studied again and Gandhiji admitted that it could bear the interpretation that was being put on it. On the next day, Gandhiji wrote a letter to me in which he said that he had committed a mistake in interpreting the Bombay resolution differently and that the proper thing for him and for the Congress would be that he should be relieved of the responsibility of leading the movement.

DIFFICULT SITUATION

The Committee was faced with very difficult situation. None of us was prepared to hear this from Gandhiji. Efforts to persuade Gandhiji not to give up the stewardship of the Congress proved non-avail. The discussions were suspended for three days. I was asked in company with Jawarharlal to see Gandhiji and try to find a way out. Both of us tried our best, but we found that Gandhiji would not budge and he stood like a rock on his decision. Gandhiji said that for him it was no more a question of meeting them half way or finding a formula on which they could agree. The question before him was whether we were prepared to take up the position that the Congress would not participate in the present war on the

Saturday, Jan. 3, 1942.

non-violence alone.

We found ourselves unable to go so far despite our utmost desire to do so. It is quite possible that Congress may not find a way, when it would be possible for the Congress to participate in the war or to come to a settlement with British Government; but in political life it is never possible to arrive at decisions beforehand or to close all doors for all time. In these circumstances there is no other way before us but to bow before Gandhiji's decision. Consequently, he addressed the letter to me which was placed before the committee and the committee arrived at the decision which is now before the country.

TWO PARTS OF BOMBAY RESOLUTION

"There were two parts of the Bombay resolution. In one of them, we had declared that it was not possible for the Congress to participate in the war. In the other we had requested Gandhiji and had authorised him to launch Civil Disobedience on behalf of the Congress. Now after Gandhiji's decision, the Satyagraha movement is naturally suspended. What he now wishes is to continue it, not on behalf of the Congress, but in pursuance of his own mission. The Working Committee had made it clear that those Congressmen who wished to participate in that movement in their individual capacity may do so and naturally nothing would please the Congress more than to see his mission succeed.

I must however make it clear that even if Gandhiji had not raised this question of non-violence at this juncture, the main resolution would have been the same. Nothing would be more incorrect than to think that the Committee's main resolution was influenced by Gandhiji's present decision. As a matter of fact it was at Gandhiji's suggestion that a sub-committee consisting of four members, besides me, drafted the main resolution. These members were Babu Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant. It is common knowledge that the five

Saturday, Jan. 3, 1942.

members of the Committee hold different views on several issues. But the fact that ultimately they could come to the decision which is now before the country shows unanimity of opinion in the Working Committee on this particular issue."

NEXT STEP

Questioned what would be the next step of the Congress the Maulana said that it was difficult to predict what the Congress would do. One thing was very clear and that was that the position of the Congress regarding the present war remained unchanged.

Asked whether the Congress members of the Central Assembly would be permitted to attend the Assembly session, the Maulana said that Mr. Bhulabhai had placed before ~~the~~ Gandhiji the views of the Congress Assembly party before his release. He had not personally seen the report. He, however, thought that compared to big issues now before the country the question of attending the Assembly was a minor one and to him it was meaningless too. However, there was no hard and fast rule and if ever it was considered necessary to allow members to attend the Assembly, they might be allowed.

CONGRESS AND A.R.P.

With regard to the participation of Congressmen in A.R.P. work the Maulana said that so far as accepting the membership on the Committee was concerned, Congress members were not allowed to accept it. But it was the duty of the Congressmen to do all to save the life and property in any eventuality. But he made it clear that Congressmen were not to come into conflict with the authorities in the A.R.P. work. - (A. P.)

Friday, Jan. 9, 1942.

No Withdrawal of Leadership

MAHATMA & CONGRESS

Maulana Azad On Bardoli Resolution

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement on the Bardoli Resolution of the Working Committee vis-a-vis Mahatma Gandhi's attitude :-

" If there is any man in this country or outside, who has interpreted the Bardoli Resolution in the sense that Mahatma Gandhi has withdrawn from the Congress leadership, I would say that he knows nothing about Gandhiji, or about the Congress. Neither Gandhiji can withdraw from the leadership of the Congress nor it is possible for the Congress to remain without his guidance. The simple meaning of the Bardoli Resolution is that Gandhiji now does not want to carry on Satyagraha on behalf of the Congress. He wants to carry on Satyagraha against all wars on the ground of non-violence only, and only with those Congressmen whom he finds to be well up to his standard.

NATIONAL LIFE OF INDIA

"And after all, what is the Indian National Congress of to-day? What is the national life of India, which has developed with such an amazing speed during the last 22 years ? It is nothing but an outcome of the creative genius of Gandhiji. He alone is the author of all the chapters which the national life of India is preparing for the future. historian of the world. Every tune that rises from the strings of our national life is the creation of his finger touch. How can it be possible for him to leave the Congress; how can the Congress even think of it ?

" The world requires some illustrations in order to understand our relation, but the difficulty is that no illustration can be given in this respect. Like all his other characteristics, Gandhiji is matchless in this respect also. If he finds you can

Friday, Jan. 9, 1942.

follow him with full conviction according to his standards, he would lead you as no other leader of the world can. If he finds that you cannot, then he would stop; but even in such a situation he would treat you in a manner which you cannot expect from any other leader of the world.

MAHATMA'S GUIDANCE.

" You will not see even the faintest shadow of complaint or bitterness. He will simply admit the differences, and in spite of them he will treat you in the same manner as he used to do before. Even in the matter in which you differ from him, he will give you every kind of guidance which you expect from him. What happened at Bardoli ? He differed from us in a particular matter. But we are so much accustomed to take his guidance, and he too is so much accustomed to give it to us, that in spite of difference there was nothing that would reflect the slightest change in our attitude. The Working Committee remained looking towards him for guidance in every matter and he continued advising it in every matter, as usual. We relied on him even in the matter in which we had differed. I requested him to draft that very resolution which the Committee had to adopt about his decision. He readily acceded to fit, and the draft was ready the next morning. We only added a few lines to it, in which we have assured him that our position regarding non-violence remains the same as we had accepted in the Bombay Resolution ".

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Friday, Jan. 16, 1942.

ACCEPT BARDOLI RESOLUTION

GANDHIJI'S REQUEST TO A.I.C.C.

President Explains his Difference With
Mahatma

CONGRESS POSITION UNCHANGED

No Help in War Efforts Without Guarantee
Of Independence.

WARDHA, Jan. 15.

A Z A D E X P L A I N S

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in the course of his speech, comprehensively reviewed the political events during the last sixteen months. After referring to the Bardoli resolution Maulana Azad said, " You are now exactly where you stood sixteen months ago. You have not budged an inch forward. Nothing has happened that would make us change our attitude. We do want a change and we do want to obtain the control of the Government of our country irrespective whether there is war or peace. At Bardoli we took stock of what had happened during the last sixteen months and also had to consider what should be our next step. The resolution is before you. I am sure that every one of you will agree with the Working Committee that there is no necessity yet to make any change in the attitude of the Congress so far as war is concerned - our position is one of non-participation and non-cooperation in war efforts.

That was the position in 1940 and that remains the position ^{to-day} ~~to-day~~. The British Government have not done any thing that would invite us to reconsider our position. "

HIS DIFFERENCE WITH GANDHIJI

Maulana Azad then explained the difference in outlook between himself and Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi had a mission in life not only for India but for the whole world. He (Gandhiji) had declared that he would not have independence of India secured under the shadow of war and on condition that the country should

Friday, Jan. 16, 1942.

support war. "That is not the position with me and others and I am prepared to accept the independence of my country at any moment it is available whether it is during war or peace. My whole and only object is the attainment of the freedom of Hindustan. It does not matter if it is attained under the shadow of war. The only thing is that it should be real independence.

NO CHANGE OF MIND EXPECTED

Maulana Azad continued : " Mahatma Gandhi would have the Congress adopt the attitude that India cannot participate in this or any other war, adhering to the principle of non-violence. We were not prepared to accept that position because we were aware that the vast majority of our countrymen would not accept that position. We tried to persuade Mahatma Gandhi not to take the step he had taken and to postpone it in view of the fact that there was not prospect of any settlement being arrived at ~~with~~ with the British Government. We were sure and we were not prepared to believe that the ruling classes of Britain would change their minds. It is true that whatever the country has achieved so far, is due to Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and our adherence to the principle of non-violence. It is, therefore, pointed out that logically we should pursue the same path and apply the principle of non-violence in all spheres of life. But it should not be forgotten that logic does not always rule life. In any case we were not prepared to accept the position that India should not defend herself with weapons".

PERSONAL RELATION UNAFFECTED

Continuing Maulana Azad said that although Mahatma Gandhi and other members of the Working Committee had differed, it had

not affected their personal mutual relations in any way,
" The relationship between Mahatma Gandhi and us," he said,
"is unique. There is nothing except death that can part
us and the same is the relationship for that matter between
Mahatma Gandhi and the National Congress and the national
life of this country."

Maulana Azad spoke for more than ninety minutes. In
conclusion he ridiculed rumours that there is split in
the Congress. ...

... COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

At the conclusion of Wednesday's session of the Working
Committee Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President interview-
ed by the United Press representative said : "After my
opening speech to-morrow, I propose to request Gandhiji to
address the house. That will facilitate matters. We are
placing the Bardoli resolution without any change, before the
A.I.C.C. for their approval. The Working Committee members
will support it, and vote for it in pursuance of the time-
honoured convention of joint responsibility of members, their
individual views notwithstanding. The Working Committee
requested Gandhiji for elucidation of the constructive
programme which should be taken up under prevailing conditions
in the country. Mahatmajī explained the pros and cons of the
programme and the way to put it through. He hoped to place
instruction based on our discussions before the A.I.C.C.
for its approval. - (A.P.)

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 1942.

RENEWED RESOLVE TO WIN INDIA'S FREEDOM
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Meetings & Hoisting of National Flags
In Calcutta & Suburbs.

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Congress President Administers Sacred
Pledge at Calcutta Meeting

...

INDEPENDENCE PLEDGE

Rastrapati Abul Kalam Azad presided over the huge public meeting which was held on Monday afternoon under the auspices of the B.P.C.C. at Mohammed Ali Park in celebration of the Independence Day. The meeting which was the biggest in recent time was attended by all sections and communities.

Rastrapati in a stirring speech explained the significance of the Independence pledge and the decision which the A.I.C.C. had arrived at Wardha. Rastrapati administered the pledge to the gathering in Hindi and its Bengali version was administered by Dr. Protap Guha Roy.

CONGRESS PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Addressing the meeting the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that they had gathered there to take independence pledge anew. About 12 years ago they had announced at Lahore that the aim of the Congress was to attain complete independence for India, and since then they had been taking this pledge every year on the 26th of January.

Referring to the present political situation in the country the Maulana Saheb said that unlike the previous years, when peaceful atmosphere prevailed, to-day war clouds were hovering on the horizon. In these disturbed conditions they wanted to live with honour; but the time was not such as to enable one to live for honour's sake. Now the question was how to die with honour, to die for their hearths and homes and for the country. This privilege to live and die with honour and prestige was denied to them. Who had denied them this privilege? It was the British Government. This British Government had first denied them the

Tuesday, Jan, 27, 1942.

to live with honour and then to die with honour.

INDIA & BRITISH POLICY

Now there was another question, the Maulana Saheb continued, they were asked to die but what for should they sacrifice their lives ? Should they sacrifice their lives for a country which was not theirs ? Unless they knew that the house for which they were asked to die was theirs, they could not change their present policy. About 3 years had passed since the commencement of the war and passed away without effecting any change in the policy of the British Government towards this country. "It is a tragedy that statesman^e like Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery can neither understand the present world situation, nor its future course of events. Therefore, it is vain to hope that the freedom of India will be coming to them as a gift from the British Government. It is Indians who will have to earn it. They will have to act up to the pledge remembering that like other nations in the world, they have the right to enjoy the ~~for~~ fruits of their labour. No obstacle should deter us from the attainment of our objective. We must surmount all difficulties that might come in our way, and reach our goal. We must prepare our heart within for the ordeal which is in store for us."

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

The Maulana Saheb urged his audience to follow the constructive programme of the Congress, and try to establish communal amity in their respective spheres of activity. He also enjoined upon them to remove untouchability, which was eating into the vitals of their society. In this connection he referred to the new constructive programme which had been adopted at the recent A.I.C.C. meeting at Wardha in order to meet their present demands.

Tuesday, Jan, 27, 1942.

Concluding the Congress President said that once they got the power in their hands it would be a different thing. But now they were helpless. It is our duty to do whatever we can to alleviate the misery of the people specially in these parts of the country (rural areas). Every Congress worker should dedicate his life to the services of the rural folk. Organisations of Congress workers should at once be set up for the purpose. Had I the power to change the Congress constitution. I would have made this service compulsory for every Congress worker".

The Congress President then read out the independence pledge which was adopted by the gathering all standing. ... - (U. P.)

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Sunday, February, 1, 1942.

Line Of Action In Wartime

AZAD EXPLAINS

Constructive Programme of Bardoli Resolution

PATNA, Jan. 30.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, explained at a crowded meeting this evening what he called the new constructive programme embodied in the Bardoli resolution. It was new in the sense, Maulana Azad said, that it envisaged a particular line of action to be followed by the Congress during the war time conditions.

Its first and most important object was to prevent a rupture of the social and economic life of the people, which might happen on account of the war.

Secondly, it did not propose to precipitate a clash with the Govt. and thirdly, it placed no barrier against any organisation, official or non-official to co-operate with the Congress in relieving the war-distressed people.

Maulana Azad contended that it was the only practicable programme in the midst of such predicament as the Congress and the country had been put into by the unyielding attitude of the British Govt. and appealed to the people to take up the programme in a spirit of mutual aid. A time was coming he continued, when plunder and arson might be frequent. It could not be expected of the Government with all its efforts concentrated on the prosecution of the war to divert them to prevent such chaos. Ultimately, the responsibility of leading an ordered life in the midst of such troublous times devolved on the people themselves. That could be done only when people were determined to restrain the unsocial elements from breaking through. It would be possible for a corporate and organised body to prevent any attempted disruption of the social life by these elements.

Sunday, February 1, 1942.

Maulana Azad regretted that the country should have been kept in such unprepared and helpless state by the Govt. He asserted that thousands of Indians were ready to defend their country and fight against aggressor. The British Govt. having clogged itself in a slough of conservatism, would not however take advantage of this intense patriotism of India. It was a sad state of affairs that troops from China would be brought into action for defending India's frontiers whereas millions of Indians would be compelled to resign to the role of passive spectators.

Concluding Maulana appealed to the people to be realistic and give up their complacency. He appealed for co-operation from all sections of people and hoped that with the joint efforts the country would be able to ward off all difficulties which might arise from the war.

Earlier, in the evening Maulana Azad attended a tea party given in his honour by Mr. M. Yunus, M.L.A., at which Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha, former Prime Minister of Bihar and Mr. Anugraha Narain Sinha, Prof. Abdul Bari and several other leading men of the town were present.

Maulana Azad will attend the meeting of the provincial Congress committee to-morrow morning and address the members explaining the Bardoli resolution - (A.P.)

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Saturday, Feb. 28, 1942.

THIS HOUR OF GRAVE PERIL

MAULANA AZAD'S APPEAL

Co-operation with B.P.C.C.

An exhortation to face manfully any eventuality that might occur was made to the citizens of Calcutta by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressing a crowd meeting at Mahomed Ali Park on Friday afternoon. Like other free nations, the Congress President added, Indians wanted to live honourably and if necessary, die honourably.

The Maulana appealed to the audience to co-operate with the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in serving their fellowmen at this hour of grave peril. ~~St~~

Sjta. Labanya Probha Dutta, President of the B.P.C.C. was in the chair.

A full and correct appraisal of the situation was essential, observed Maulana Azad, so that they might manfully face the crisis that confronted the country to-day. They should, however, neither exaggerate ^{nor} ~~ne~~ under-estimate its gravity.

So long the war had been raging at the frontiers of India but now it was knocking at their very door. The danger from Far East was undoubtedly great and increasing every day. But, at the same time, they should not shut their eyes to the fact that India was also threatened from the West and by May or June next it was just possible that the danger might overtake them in this country.

A titanic struggle was being waged in the snow fields of Russia. The German plan for victory before the winter set in ^{had} ~~at~~ received a serious set back. Winter, however, was going to end soon and it would be no wonder if things took a quite different turn on the Soviet frontier. It was no doubt difficult to visualise events as they might take place during the next couple of months but it was by no means an impossible proposition for the Germans

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to penetrate into Iran through Caucasus ^{and} ~~an~~ attack India.

Although, Maulana Azad thought, it would prove a difficult task for Japan to conquer Burma and attack India by land and ~~for~~ more difficult for Germany to penetrate through Caucasus he reminded the audience that success in modern war was by an ^d large dependent on air superiority and as such that coastal towns of India like Calcutta, Chittagong, and Madras were vulnerable.

The danger was admittedly grave but their greatest ^e misfortune would be if under its stress people lost their moral^e and got panic-stricken. For the last 150 years, the Maulana regretted, Indians had been living in peace bought at the price of their freedom and had forgotten how to face death as men. Death, he reminded, ^{specifically} ~~speedily~~ overtook those who sought to run away from it. They must realise that they could save neither themselves nor their fellowmen if they were seized with panic and lost their mental balance.

Let them look at the world to-day; the problem before humanity was not how to live somehow but how to die honourably. Indians wanted to live as free and honourable men and if necessary, to die as free and honourable men. But the Britishers had closed the path to that although the Congress had tried to keep it open. Those who had blocked the path were in reality responsible for the present position of India's helplessness and unless the path was opened they could not advance a step.

But, the Maulana continued, there was a second path open to the Indians and that was the path of service to themselves and their fellowmen during the period of emergency. He was glad that the Congress had taken up the work. During his tour throughout Northern India he had felt that the people were looking towards the Congress for a lead. The Congress had declared that it would welcome co-operation from individuals and organisations outside ^{to} the Congress. A programme had been laid down according to the plan and satisfactory work was being done in several provinces in Northern India.

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He reminded that all sorts of trouble might ^{crop up} ~~come up~~ during ^{and} an air raid [^] as there was no national Government in India. Congress had to take up a lot of work. But he was afraid that this work could not be carried on in an official way and although the Government would do something the Congress did not know how far ^{be} it would/sufficient. The Congress would do what they could with full responsibilities and would be prepared to co-operate not only with the Government but with other parties willing to work on this behalf.

But the city most threatened, at the present moment, Maulana Azad proceeded, was Calcutta and the organisation they had set up would have its supreme test here. A sub-committee to carry on the work was formed by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee a few weeks ago and he was glad to say that satisfactory progress had been made.

Calcutta, the Maulana announced, had been ^{divided} ~~devised~~ for this purpose into 32 wards each placed in charge of responsible wardens and willing workers were being recruited in each locality. The organisation should permeate downward so that direct contact was established with each and every house and hamlet. Volunteers in every ward would educate the public as to what they were to do in the event of an emergency.

It was far from their intention, he added, to come into clash with A.R.P. organisation. The Congress wanted to serve the people and not hamper the work of those who also wanted to serve. They would leave A.R.P. organisation with the Government if it functioned alright. Maulana Azad would not on the present occasion go into the details of the work of the B.P.C.C. sub-committee but he would like to make/earnest appeal to the citizens to co-operate wholeheartedly with the sub-committee in this useful work.

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A large proportion of Calcutta's population lived in bustees and they had no protection whatsoever against death and destruction the enemy bombs might rain upon the city. It was the duty of the citizens to help these people and render~~o~~ unto them every service possible.

The danger was great but, the Congress President exhorted, it was up to the citizens to rise to the occasion. The only way to save one's own self was to try to save others.

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Thursday, March 5, 1942.

ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN'S RESIGNATION

AZAD EXPLAINS

Better Service To Congress Expected

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President has issued a statement announcing the acceptance of the resignation of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan of his membership of the Congress Working Committee and nominating Dr. Khan Sahab in the vacancy.

The statement runs as follows :-

At the occasion of the last A.I.C.C session at Wardha, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan had a long talk with me, as how to promote the constructive programme of the Congress in the N.W.F.P. I found that the Khan Sahab keenly believed that he would be able to serve this purpose better if he be relieved of the membership of the Congress Working Committee. He also emphasised the fact that he was an out and out believer in Non-Violence in all walks of life; and he found himself quite at one with Mahatma Gandhi in that matter. Considering this aspect as well, he thinks that he will be more useful in the great work which he wishes to undertake in his province, if he is relieved from the membership of the Committee. It is needless to say that I ^{and} ~~and~~ my colleagues were at first not prepared to agree to this proposal. But on further consideration I preferred to leave it to his judgement. I said I would not prevent him from adopting this method, provided that his decision remained unchanged even after consultation with the Provincial Congress Committee. Now I have received his resignation in which he writes :

" As per our conversation I have talked to my friends and co-workers here. We have all come to the conclusion that the Congress will be better served by my being relieved of official connection with the Congress and devoting myself solely to the Congress constructive programme. As I have told you I am a believer out and out in the non-violent method in all walks of life, I will be better able to carry the message of non-violence to the Pathan mind if I am detached officially from the Congress, whose policy can vary according to the exigencies

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as ~~they~~ may arise from time to time. My bond with the Congress will thus be richer than hitherto."

" I therefore accept his resignation, and nominate in the vacancy thus created Dr. Khan Saheb.

" Whether Khan Abul Ghaffar Khan is in the Working Committee or not, he will always hold a high place in the Congress. He has a place in the heart of every Congressman."

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UNANIMOUS DEMAND OF INDIAN PEOPLE

A TRULY NATIONAL GOVT.

Maulana Azad's Letter To Sir Stafford Cripps

CONGRESS AND DEFENCE QUESTION

Reasons Why British War Cabinet's Proposals Are Rejected

Maulana Azad in his letter to Sir Stafford dated April 10th refers to the question of Defence and says the National Government would control Defence through the Defence Minister and the Commander-in-Chief would control the armed forces and have full latitude in carrying out operations connected with the war. An Indian National Government should have normally functioned in this war.

But the new picture, further states Maulana Azad, placed by Sir Stafford Cripps before the Congress Working Committee was really not very different from the old.

INDIA OFFICE NOT WANTED

NEW DELHI, APR. 11

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his letter to Sir Stafford Cripps dated April 10th elucidating the Working Committee's resolutions, refers to the discussion on the transfer of Defence and says that on general principles the National Government would control Defence through the Defence Minister and the Commander-in-Chief would control the armed forces and have full latitude in carrying out operations connected with the war.

An Indian National Government should have normally functioned in this way. We have made it clear that the Commander-in-Chief, India, would have the control of the armed forces and the conduct of operations and other matters connected with them. With a view to arriving at a settlement we were prepared to accept certain limitations

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on the normal parts of the Defence Minister. We had no desire to upset in the middle of the war the present military organisation or arrangements.

HIGHER STRATEGY

We accepted also that the higher strategy of war should be controlled by the War Cabinet in London which would have an Indian member. The immediate object before us was to make the defence of India more effective, strengthen it, broaden it on popular will and reduce all red tape, delay and inefficiency from it. There was no question of our interfering with the technical and operational sides. One thing of course was of paramount importance to us; India's safety and defence.

UNANIMOUS DESIRE

Subject to this primary consideration there was no reason why there should be any difficulty in finding a way out of the present impasse in accordance with the unanimous desire of the Indian people for in this matter there are no differences among us.

DIFFERENT FORMULAE

Maulana Azad deals with the different formulae suggested for Defence and says : "The wording of a formula is after all a minor matter and we would not allow that to come in our way unless some important principle is at stake. But behind that wording lay certain ideas and we were surprised to find that during the past few days we had been proceeding on wrong assumptions. When we asked you for illustrative list of subjects for two departments you referred us to an old list for the Defence Department which you had previously sent us and which we had been unable to accept.

RESIDUARY SUBJECTS

You added that certain residuary subjects might be added hereto, but in effect there was not likely to be any such subjects as the allocation was complete. Thus you said

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substantially there was no change between the old list and any new one that might be prepared. If this is so and we are to go back ultimately to the place we started from, what was the purpose of our searching for new formulae ? A new set of words meaning the same thing made no difference.

NEW PICTURE

Maulana Azad says : In the course of our talks many other matters were also cleared up unfortunately to our disadvantage. You had referred both privately and in the course of public statements to a National Government and a cabinet consisting of ministers. These words have certain significance and we had imagined that the new Government would function with full powers as a cabinet with the Viceroy acting as the constitutional head, but the new picture you placed before us was really not very different from the old, the difference being one of degree and not of kind.

NO NATIONAL GOVT.

The New Government could neither be called National except vaguely and inaccurately, ^{nor} ~~not~~ could it function as a National Government. It would just be the Viceroy and His Executive Council with the Viceroy having all his old powers. We did not ask for any legal changes but we did ask for definite assurances and conventions which would indicate that the new Government would function as a free Government, the members of which would act as the members of a cabinet in a constitutional Government. With regard to the war and connected activities the Commander-in-Chief would have freedom and ^{he} ~~we~~ would also act as War Minister.

FUTURE CONVENTIONS

We were informed that nothing can be said at this stage even vaguely and generally about the conventions that should govern the new Government and the Viceroy. This was a matter in the Viceroy's sole discretion and at a later stage it could be discussed directly with the

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Viceroy. Ultimately there was always the possibility of the members of the Executive Council resigning or threatening to resign if they disagreed with the Viceroy. That sanction or remedy is of course always open but it is curious that we should base our approach to the new Government on the probability of conflict and resignation at the very outset.

THE OLD PICTURE

The picture therefore before us is not essentially different from the old one. The whole object which we and I believe you have in view, that is to create a new psychological approach to the people to make them feel their own National Government had come, that they were defending their newly won freedom - would completely be frustrated when they saw this old picture again with even old labels on. The continuation of the India Office which has been a symbol of ^{civil} ~~civil~~ to us would confirm this picture.

INDIA OFFICE

It has almost been taken for granted for some time past that the India Office would soon disappear as it was an anachronism but now we are told that even this undesirable relic of the past age is going to continue. The picture of the Government which was so like the old in all essential features, is such as we cannot fit into it. Normally we would have had little difficulty in disposing of this matter for it is so far removed from all we have striven for but in the circumstances of to-day, we were prepared to give full consideration to every proposal which might lead to the effective organisation of the defence of India.

INDIANS AFFECTED

The peril that faces India affects us more than it can possibly ~~affects~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ any foreigner and we are anxious and eager to do our utmost to face it and overcome it, but we cannot undertake responsibilities

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when we are not given freedom and power to shoulder them effectively and when the old environment continues which hampers national effort.

CABINET GOVT.

While we cannot accept the proposals you have made, we want to inform you that we are yet prepared to assume responsibility, provided a truly National Government is formed. We are prepared to put aside for the present all questions about the future, though as we have indicated, we hold definite views about it, but in the present, the National Government must be a Cabinet Government with full power and must not merely be a continuation of the Viceroy's Executive Council. In regard to Defence, we have already stated what in our opinion the position should be at present.

A TRAGEDY

We feel such arrangement is the very minimum that is essential for the functioning of a National Government and for making a popular appeal which is urgently needed.

We would point out to you that the suggestions we have put forward ^{are} not ours but may be considered to be the unanimous demand of the Indian people. On these matters there is no difference between the Indian people as a whole and the British Government. As such differences as exist in India relate to constitutional changes of the future.

We are agreeable to postponement of this issue so that the largest possible measure of unity might be achieved in the present crisis for the defence of India. It would be a tragedy that even when there is this unanimity of opinion in India the British Government should prevent a free National Government from functioning and from serving the cause of India as well as the larger causes for which millions are suffering and dying to-day.

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CRIPPS'S REPLY TO AZAD

National Govt. Now A Practical Impossibility

The following is the text of a reply sent by the Rt.Hon'ble Sir Stafford Cripps to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to his letter communicating the decision of the Congress Working Committee.

My Dear Maulana Sahib, - I was extremely sorry to receive from you your letter of April 10, expressing the rejection by Congress Working Committee of His Majesty's Government's draft declaration.

I will not deal with those points which are covered by the original resolution of your Committee which you sent me, as they were clearly not the reason for your decision.

Nor need I go into the question of the division of duties between the Defence Minister and the Commander-in-Chief as War Member with which you deal at length. This division allotted to the Defence Minister and functions outside those actually connected with the General Headquarters. Navy Headquarters and Air Headquarters which are under the Commander-in-Chief as head of the fighting forces in India.

In addition to those² functions in the narrow field of "Defence" it was suggested that all other portfolios relating to that subject such as :-

Home Department - Internal order, police, refugees, etc.

Communications Department - Railways, roads, transport, etc.

Finance Department - All war finance in India.

Supply Department - Supplies for all forces and munitions.

Information and Broadcasting Department - Propaganda, Publicity, etc.

Civil Defence Department - A.R.P. and all forms of civilian defence.

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Legislative Department - Regulations and orders.

Labour Department - Manpower.

Defence Department - Administration of Indian personnel, etc. should be put in the hands of representative Indians as members of the Executive Council.

Nothing further could have been done by way of giving responsibility for defence services to representative Indian members without jeopardising the immediate defence of India under the Commander-in-Chief. This defence is, as you know, a paramount duty and responsibility of His Majesty's Government, while unity of command is essential in the interests of the Allied help to India.

The real substance of your refusal to take part in a National Government is that the form of Government suggested is not such as would enable you to rally the Indian people as you desire.

PRACTICAL IMPOSSIBILITY

You make two suggestions, First, that the constitution might now be changed. In this respect I would point out that you made this suggestion for the first time last night, nearly three weeks after you had received the proposals, and I would further remark that every other representative with whom I have discussed this view has accepted the practical impossibility of any such legislative change in the middle of a war and at such a moment as the present.

Second, you suggest "a truly National Government" be formed, **which** must be a "Cabinet Government with full power."

Without constitutional changes of a most complicated character and on a very large scale this would not be possible as you realise.

ABSOLUTE DICTATORSHIP

Were such a system to be introduced by convention under the existing circumstances, the nominated Cabinet

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(nominated presumably by the major political organisation) would be responsible to no one but itself, could not be removed and would in fact constitute an absolute dictatorship of the majority.

This suggestion would be rejected by all minorities in India, since it would subject all of them to a permanent and autocratic majority in the Cabinet. Nor would it be consistent with the pledges already given by His Majesty's Government to protect the rights of these minorities.

In a country such as India where communal divisions are still so deep, and irresponsible majority Government of this kind is not possible.

Apart from this, however, until such time as the Indian peoples frame their new constitution, His Majesty's Government must continue to carry out its duties to those large sections of the Indian people to whom it has given its pledges.

The proposals of His Majesty's Government went as far as possible short of a complete constitution which is generally acknowledged as impracticable in the circumstances of to-day.

While therefore both I and His Majesty's Government recognise the keen desire of your Working Committee to carry on the war against the enemy ^{by} ~~to~~ every means in their power, they regret that your Working Committee has not seen its way to join in the war effort upon the conditions sincerely offered, the only conditions which could have brought together all the different communities and sections of the Indian people.

Yours sincerely,
R. Stafford Cripps.

April 12, 1942

M. AZAD'S REPLY

British Govt. Unable To Give Up Wrecking Policy

"We are convinced that if the British Government did not pursue a policy of encouraging disruption, all of us, to whatever party or group we belonged would be able to come together and find a common line of action", declares Maulana Azad in a reply sent to-day to Sir Stafford ^{Cripps's} ~~Cripps's~~ letter of yesterday.

"I have just received your letter of April 10" says the reply, "and I must confess that my colleagues and I were considerably surprised to read it. I am sending you this reply immediately and can only deal briefly here with some of the points you have raised.

REAL POWER WANTED

The points covered by our original resolution are important and represent my committee's well-considered views on the British proposals as a whole. But we pointed out to you that so far as the proposals relate to the future they might be set aside, as we were anxious to assume responsibility for India's Government and defence in this hour of danger. This responsibility could only be undertaken, however, if it was real responsibility and power.

DEFENCE FUNCTIONS

As regards the division of functions between the Defence Minister and the War Minister you did not give illustrative lists, as requested by us, and referred us to the previous list of the Defence Minister's functions, which, as you know, we had been wholly unable to accept. In your letter under reply you mention certain subjects, directly or indirectly related to the war, which will be administered by other departments. So far as the Defence Minister is concerned, it is clear that his functions will be limited by the first list that you sent.

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POWERS OF C.-IN-C.

No one has suggested any restrictions on the normal powers of the Commander-in-Chief. Indeed we went beyond this and were prepared to agree to further powers being given to him as War-Minister. But it is clear that the British Government's conception and ours in regard to Defence differ greatly.

For us it means giving~~x~~ it a national character and calling up-on every man and woman in India to participate in it. It means trusting our own people and seeking their full~~l~~ co-operation in this great effort. The British Government's view seems to be based on an utter lack of confidence in the Indian people and in withholding real power from them.

You refer to the paramount duty and responsibility of His Majesty's Government in regard to Defence. That duty and responsibility cannot be discharged effectively unless the Indian people are ~~made~~ to have and feel their responsibility, and the recent past stands witness to this. The Government of India do not seem to realise that the war can only be fought on a popular basis.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Your statement that we have for the first time after three weeks suggested a change in the constitution is hardly correct. In the course of our talks reference was made to it, but it is true that we did not lay stress on it as we did not want to introduce new issues. But when you stated explicitly in your letter that we had agreed that no constitutional changes could be made during the war, we had to deny this and correct your impression.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

It is the last part of your letter that has especially surprised and pained us. It seems th t there has been a progressive deterioration in the British Government's attitude as our negotiations proceeded. What we were told

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in our very first talk with you is now denied or explained away. You told me then that there would be a National Government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of the King in England vis-a-vis his Cabinet. In regard to the India Office, you told me, that you were surprised that no one had so far mentioned this important matter, and that the practical course was to have this attached or incorporated with the Dominions Office.

PICTURE SHATTERED

The whole of this picture which you sketched before us has now been completely shattered during our last interview.

MIXED CABINET

You have put forward an argument in your letter which at no time during our talks was mentioned by you. You refer to the 'absolute dictatorship of the majority.' It is astonishing that such a statement should be made in this connection and at this stage. This difficulty is inherent in any scheme of a mixed Cabinet formed to meet an emergency, but there are many ways in which it can be provided for. Had you raised this question we would have discussed it and found a satisfactory solution. The whole approach to this question has been that a mixed Cabinet should be formed and should cooperate together. We accepted this. We are not interested in the Congress as such gaining power, but we are interested in the Indian people as a whole having freedom and power. How the Cabinet should be formed and should function was a question which might have been considered after the main question was decided; that is, the extent of power, ^{which the British Government would} give up to the Indian people. Because of this we never discussed it with you or even referred to it. Nevertheless you have raised this matter for the first time, in what is presumably your last letter to us, and tried most unjustifiably to side-track the real issue between us.

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COMMUNAL QUESTION

You will remember that in my very first talk with you, I pointed out that the communal or like questions did not arise at this stage. As soon as the British Government made up its mind to transfer real power and responsibility, the other questions could be tackled successfully by those concerned. You gave me the impression that you agreed with this approach.

WRECKING POLICY

We are convinced that if the British Government did not pursue a policy of encouraging disruption, all of us, to whatever party or group we belonged, would be able to come together and find a common line of action. But unhappily, even in this grave hour of peril, the British Government is unable to give up its wrecking policy. We are driven to the conclusion that it attaches more importance to holding on to its rule in India, as long as it can, and promoting discord and disruption here with that end in view, than to an effective defence of India against the aggression and invasion that overhang us. To us, and to all Indians, the dominant consideration is the defence and safety of India, and it is by that test that we judge.

You mention that you propose to publish your letter to me. I presume that you have no objection now to our publishing our original resolution, your letters to us, and our letters to you.

CRIPPS' LETTERS TO AZAD

Following is the text of correspondence between Sir Stafford Cripps and Maulana Azad :-

Letter dated 30th March 1942, from ^{Sir} ~~Sir~~ Stafford Cripps :

"My Dear Maulana Sahib,

I had the opportunity of a short talk with H.E. the Viceroy last night during which he discussed with me his views as to the implementation of clause (E) of the

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document. I propose to make the position as to this as clear as I can in my broadcast to-night.

The Viceroy would be prepared to consult with Indian leaders on this basis to see whether it were possible to designate an Indian to some office connected with the Government of India's defence responsibilities without in any way impinging upon the functions and duties of the Commander-in-Chief either in his capacity as Supreme Commander of the armed forces in India or as the Member of the Executive Council in charge of defence.

I give you this information as you put the question to me when last I had the pleasure of seeing you.

Letter dated First April, 1942.

Dear Maulana Sahib,

I understand from the Hindu press that difficulties are still in the mind of Congress as to the question of the responsibility for the defence of India.

I have done what I could ^{to} ~~not~~ clarify this point but as I think it would be a tragedy if negotiations were to break down upon any misunderstanding of the position. I should like to suggest that I should ask the Commander-in-Chief to meet yourself and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with myself in order that he may explain fully to you the technical difficulties of the situation and in order that you may make to him any suggestions you wish as to the division of responsibilities in this sphere of Government. Unfortunately he is at the moment away at Calcutta but he is expected back on Saturday next at the latest and possibly earlier. If you consider this a helpful suggestion - as I hope you will - I will ask him the moment he returns whether he will be prepared to attend such a meeting and I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulty about it.

I am sure you will realise that I do not want to be met with an impasse if there is any reasonable way out."

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MAULANA AZAD'S REPLY

(From Mr. A.K. Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps dated 1st April 1942).

Dear Sir Stafford,

I have your letter of to-day's date, for which I thank you.

If you so desire it, I shall ^{gladly}~~gladly~~ meet the Commander-in-Chief and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will, I hope, be able to accompany me.

My Committee have already arrived at a decision in regard to the proposals communicated by you to us. It was my intention to send this to you this evening, or possibly to take it over in person, in case you wished to discuss any point contained in it. This decision naturally covers other points also apart from defence. I hope to send it to you some time to-day. If you wish to meet me again in regard to this I shall gladly meet you.

In your letter you refer to the "Hindu Press", I do not know what exactly you mean by this."

SIR STAFFORDS'S REPLY

Letter from Sir Stafford Cripps to Maulana Sahib dated 1-4-42.

"My dear Maulana Sahib,

Thank ~~that~~ you very much for your letter.

I will make the arrangement for the meeting with the Commander-in-Chief the moment he returns.

As to the document you are sending over, I understand this expresses the views of the Congress Working Committee upon the proposals, but that it is not intended to be a definite and final statement as to the Congress attitude, in view of our meeting again.

I should be most grateful if you could come over and see me with regard to it to-morrow morning at 10 A.M.

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I apologise for the reference to the "Hindu Press". I was refering to the "Hindustan Times" amongst other papers.

MEETING WITH WAVELL

(From Sir Stafford to Mr. Azad dated 3rd April, 1942).

"My dear Maulana Sahib,

I have now been able to see His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and he will be very glad to meet you and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to discuss the position regarding defence. Subject to your convenience, 6 O' clock to-morrow evening would suit General Wavell and if you can manage this, I suggest that you should come here at 10 minutes to 6 P.M. and I will go up with you to the Commander-in-Chief's office.

If there are any specific points of detail about organisation which you wish to raise, I should be very much obliged if you could let me have a note of them to-night or first thing to-morrow morning so that the Commander-in-Chief can consider them before the meeting."

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

(Letter from Sir Stafford to Mr. Azad dated 7th April, 1942).

"My dear Maulana Sahib,

I have, as I promised when I last saw you, consulted His Majesty's Government as to what further step could be taken in order to meet the criticism of your Working Committee that under clause (e) of the Draft Declaration the defence of India would not fall to be administered by a representative Indian. Although, as the Working Committee have fully understood, it is impossible to make any change in the existing constitution during the period of hostilities, His Majesty's Government are anxious to give representative Indians the maximum possible participation in the Government during that period, in accordance with the principal laid down in Clause (e) of the Draft Declaration.

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I have explained to you the technical difficulties with regard to the position of the Commander-in-Chief and will not here reiterate them.

I have also pointed out that all those main aspects of the defence of India which at present fall under the care of other members of the executive (e.g., Civil Defence, Supply, Home Affairs, Communication, etc., etc.) will if the scheme is accepted, be administered by representative members in the new national government.

His Majesty's Government are however anxious to do their utmost to meet the wishes of the Indian people and to demonstrate their complete trust in the cooperative effort of the two peoples, British and Indian, which they hope may reinforce the defence of India.

They also appreciate the force of the arguments that have been put forward as to the necessities of an effective appeal to the Indian peoples for their own defence.

A WAY OUT PROPOSED

I am therefore authorised to propose to you as a way out of the present difficulties that

(a) The Commander-in-Chief should retain a seat in the Viceroy's Executive Council as "War Member" and should retain his full control over all the war activities of the armed forces in India, subject to the control of His Majesty's Government and the War Cabinet, upon which body a representative Indian should sit with equal powers in all matters relating to the defence of India. Membership of the Pacific Council would likewise be offered to a representative Indian.

(b) An Indian representative member would be added to the Viceroy's Executive, who would take over those sections of the department of defence which can organisationally be separated immediately from the Commander-in-Chief's War Department and which are specified under head (1) ~~(a)~~ of the Annexure. In addition this member would take

over the Defence Co-ordination Department which is at present directly under the Viceroy, and certain other important functions of the Government of India which are directly related to defence and which do not fall under any of the other existing departments and which are specified under head (II) of the Annexure.

His Majesty's Government very much hope - as I personally hope, that this arrangement will enable the Congress to come into the scheme so that if other important bodies of Indian opinion are also willing it will be possible for His Excellency the Viceroy to embark forthwith upon the task of forming the new national government in consultation with the leaders of the Indian opinion."

A N N E X U R E

(1) Matters now dealt with in the defence department which would be transferred to a Defence Co-ordination Department. (A) Public Relations. (B) Demobilization and post-war reconstruction. (C) Petroleum officer, whose functions are to calculate the requirements of, and make provision for, all the petroleum products required for the army, navy and air force, and for the civil departments including storage and distribution. (D) Indian representation on the Eastern Group Supply Council, (E) Amenities for, and welfare, of troops and their dependents including Indian soldiers' boards. (F) All Canteen organisations. (G) Certain non-technical educational institutions e.g. Lawrence Schools, K.G.R. I.M. schools and the Prince of Wales' Royal Indian Military College. (H) Stationery, printing and forms for the army, (I) Reception, accommodation and social arrangements for all foreign missions, representatives and offices.

(2) In addition the Defence Co-ordination Department would take over many major questions bearing directly on defence, but difficult to locate in any particular existing departments. Examples are "Denial" policy; policy of eva-

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evacuation from threatened areas; signals co-ordination; economic warfare.

(2) Formula for defence communicated by Col. Johnson.

In amplification of the Clause (E) of the Draft Declaration His Majesty's Government make the following proposition upon the subject matter of the Defence of India.

(a) The Defence Department shall be placed in charge of a representative Indian member with the exception of functions to be exercised by the Commander-in-Chief as War member of the Executive Council.

(b) War Department will be constituted which will take over such functions of the defence department as are not retained by the Defence Member. A list of all the retained functions has been agreed to which will be added further important responsibilities including the matter now dealt with by the defence co-ordination department and other vital matters related to the defence of India.

WORKING COMMITTEE'S FORMULA FOR DEFENCE

E(a) The defence department shall be placed in the charge of a representative Indian member, but certain functions relating to the conduct of the war will be exercised for the duration of war, by the Commander-in-Chief, who will be in control of the war-activities of the armed forces in India, and who will be an extraordinary member of the National Cabinet for that purpose.

(b) A war Department will be constituted under the Commander-in-Chief. This Department will take over such functions as are to be exercised by the Commander-in-Chief. A list of such functions has been prepared and is attached.

(c) The Defence Member shall be in charge of all other matters relating to defence, including those now dealt with by the Defence Co-ordination Department.

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(4) SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS'S FORMULA

(a) The Defence Department shall be placed in the charge of a representative Indian member, but certain functions relating to the conduct of the war will be exercised until the new constitution comes into operation, by the Commander-in-Chief, who will be in control of the war activities of the armed forces in India, and who will be a member of the Executive Council for that purpose.

(b) A War Department will be constituted under the Commander-in-Chief. This Department will take over such functions as are to be exercised by the Commander-in-Chief. A list of such functions has prepared and is attached.

(c) The Defence Member shall be in charge of all other matters relating to defence in the defence department and those now dealt with by the Defence Coordination ~~MM~~ Department in addition to other important matters closely related to defence.

(d) In the event of any new functions falling to be discharged in relation to defence or any dispute arising as to the allocation of any old functions ~~it~~ shall be decided by His Majesty's Government.

The War department for which the Commander-in-Chief will be member, will be responsible for the Governmental relations of G.H.Q., N.H.Q. and A.H.Q. which include:

(1) Examining and sanctioning all proposals emanating from G.H.Q. N.H.Q. and A.H.Q.

(2) Representing the policy of Government on all questions connected with the war which originate in or concern G.H.Q., N.H.Q. or A.H.Q.

(3) Acting as the channel of communication between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government on all such questions.

(4) Acting as liaison between these headquarters and the other departments of Government, and provincial governments. - (A.P.).

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WRONG APPROACH TO INDIAN PROBLEM

BRITISH PROPOSALS CRITICISED

Indians Should Have Been Asked To Draw Up A Scheme

Congress President Lift A Corner Of The Veil Emphasis
On Three Issues

New Delhi, April 11.

Lifting a **corner** of the veil over his negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Maulana Azad, Congress President, at a press conference to-day, referred to his first interview at which, he said, he laid emphasis on three issues.

GREATER COMPLICATIONS

Firstly, he told Sir Stafford that the approach to the Indian problem made in the draft declaration was not only not correct but was likely to lead to greater complications.

A SIMPLE METHOD

If the British Government desired to infuse a new spirit in India even at this eleventh hour and send out a person **like** Sir Stafford for the task, the simple method would have been to send out through Sir Stafford the announcement that Britain was prepared to part with power. Sir Stafford could then have asked Indians to draw up a scheme. If we failed to draw one up, the entire responsibility would have been ours.

Sir Stafford, in reply, referred to the first part of the draft declaration and asserted that it was a considered decision of principle. He added that provision had already been made in it for different political organisations and it was open to them to come to an agreement at any time.

"I pointed out," said the Maulana, "that after concrete proposals had been introduced by him, the task of independent agreement among the parties in India had been made difficult."

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"Secondly," proceeded the Maulana, "I told Sir Stafford that the draft declaration laid much greater emphasis on the future than on the immediate present. While India demanded changes in the present system, the proposals relating to the present were not positive; they were negative. I said to him th t as far as the Congress was concerned. I do not see how it could accept the proposals. War, I said, was threatening India; but the light had gone out of the hearts of the millions, who might have sacrificed themselves for their country.

Our co mon task now demanded that we should find a psychological approach in order to rekindle the spark of patriotic fervour in those hearts. This could not be achieved merely by holding out promises for the future but people must be made to feel that they were free in their own country to-day and had to defend their own freedom and their own country."

"Sir Stafford, speaking the great confidence, assured me that Clause (E) of the draft declaration provided for complete freedom and transfer of power with only one reservation about defence.

"I then pointed out that defence of the country was the demand of the moment as far as the country was concerned and during the war, civil administration had disappeared because problems of defence permeated every civil department and if you reserve defence, you ^{practically} ~~partially~~ reserve all the powers which you say are being transferred to India.

"Sir Stafford said by way of reassurance that the reservations related only to the functions of the Commander-in-Chief.

"The rest of the discussion proceeded in respect of this particular question.

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COMMUNAL QUESTIONS

"The third point emphasised by me was that in tackling the political question in India communal questions were bound to arise at some stage or other and would have to be solved. I assured him that as soon as the main political problem was settled, the responsibility of finding a satisfactory solution of the communal and other problems would be ours, and I could confidently assert that we would find a satisfactory solution.

"Sir Stafford entirely agreed with me and said this was exactly what he had said before the War Cabinet before he came out to India.

"This naturally conjured up in my mind a picture of the present not found in the cold words of the draft declaration and I, therefore, naturally decided to call a meeting of the Working Committee to examine it. I, however, regret to say that the first impression of the picture created as a result of my earlier interviews with Sir Stafford gradually became blurred as the discussions on material points proceeded from stage to stage. And when I last met him on the night of April 9, the whole picture had completely faded out.

INTERVIEW WITH WAVELL

Referring to his interview with General Wavell, the Maulana said : "In the course of our talks, Sir Stafford Cripps had repeatedly emphasised the technical difficulties in the way of transferring Defence to an Indian member. He had suggested that we should meet General Wavell, because he could explain the technical side of the question much better. But curiously enough, throughout our interview with the Commander-in-Chief, at which other military officers were present, not a word was spoken about any technical difficulty; the entire discussion proceeded on political lines. It did not strike me for a moment that we were interviewing military experts but expert politicians.

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GANDHIJI'S PART

"I think," the Maulana went on, "I must clarify the position created by certain speculations in a section of the press as regards Mahatma Gandhi's part in the discussions. The Mahatma's views as regards participation in any war are well-known and it would be entirely untrue to suggest that the Working Committee's decisions have in any way been influenced by those views. In fact ^{Mahatma} ~~Maulana~~ Gandhi made it clear to the Working Committee that they were perfectly free to come to their own decisions on the merits of the proposals. He did not really want to participate even in the earlier sittings of the Working Committee but he was persuaded by me to stay on from day to day as long as he could afford to do so. Eventually, my persuasion proved powerless to make him stay longer.

"I want to repeat what I said yesterday that the Working Committee's decision has at every stage been unanimous," he declared.

He concluded : "It is deeply to be regretted that the aim which all of us had passionately desired has not been reached but I must acknowledge that all these discussions were carried on in a friendly atmosphere and in spite of profound differences, which at times led to heated controversy, we and Sir Stafford have parted as friends. The cordiality of the talks was maintained to the last." -

(A.P.)

NEW FORMULA CRITICISED

Full Text Of Azad's Letter To Sir Stafford

Following is the full text of the letter from Maulana Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps dated April 10th :-
Dear Sir Stafford,

On the Second April I sent you the resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress containing their views on the tentative proposals put forward by you on behalf of the British Government. In this resolution

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we expressed our dissent from several important and far-reaching proposals for the future. Further consideration of these proposals has only strengthened us in our conviction in regard to them, and we should like to repeat that we cannot accept them as suggested. The Working Committee's resolution given^a expression to our conclusions relating to them which we reached after the most earnest consideration.

That resolution, however, emphasized the gravity of the present situation and stated that the ultimate decision that we might take would be governed by the changes made in the present. The over-riding problem before all of us, and more especially before all Indians, is the defence of the country from aggression and invasion. The future, important as it is will depend on what happens in the next few months and years. We were, therefore, prepared to do without any assurances for this uncertain future, hoping that through our sacrifices in the defence of our ~~home~~ country we would lay the solid and enduring foundations for a free and independent India. We concentrated, therefore, on the present.

Your original proposals in regard to the present, as contained in Clause (E) of the proposed declaration, were vague and incomplete, except in so far as it was made clear that "His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the full responsibility for the defence of India." These proposals, in effect, asked for participation in the tasks of to-day with a view to ensure "the further freedom of India." Freedom was for an uncertain future, not for the present; and no indication was given in Clause (E) of what arrangements or governmental and other changes would be made in the present. When this vagueness^a was pointed out, you said that this was deliberate, so as to give you freedom to determine these changes in consultation with others. **IN** our talks you gave us to understand that you envisaged

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a national government which would deal with all matters except defence.

ESSENTIAL IMPORTANCE

Defence at any time, and more particularly in war time, is of essential importance and without it a national government functions in a very limited field. **Apart** from this consideration, it was obvious that the whole purpose of your proposals and our talks centred round the urgency of the problems created by the threat of the invasion of India. The chief functions of a National Government must necessarily be to organize defence both intensively and on the widest popular basis and to create a mass psychology of resistance to an invader. Only a National Government could do that, and only a Government on whom this responsibility was laid. Popular resistance must have a national background, and both the soldier and the civilian must feel that they are fighting for their country's freedom under national leadership.

We pointed this out to you. The question became one not of just satisfying our national aspirations but of effective prosecution of the war and fighting to the last any invader who set foot on the soil of India. On general principles ^a ~~of~~ National Government would control defence through a defence Minister, and the Commander-in-Chief would control the armed forces and would have full latitude in the carrying out of operations connected with the war. An Indian National Government should have normally functioned in this way. We made it clear that the Commander in-Chief in India would have control of the armed forces and the conduct of operations and other matters connected therewith.

HIGHER STRATEGY

With a view to arriving at a settlement, we were prepared to accept certain limitations on the normal powers of the Defence Minister. We had no desire to upset

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in the middle of the war the present military organization or arrangements. We accepted also that the higher strategy of the war should be controlled by the War Cabinet in London which would have an Indian member. The immediate object before us was to make the defence of India more effective to strengthen it, to broadbase it on the popular will, and to reduce all red tape, delay and inefficiency from it. There was no question of our interfering with the technical and operational sides. One thing, of course, was of paramount importance to us: India's safety and defence. Subject to this primary consideration, there was no reason why there should be any difficulty in finding a way out of the present impasse in accordance with the unanimous desire of the Indian people, for in this matter there are no differences amongst us.

The emphasis on defence led you to reconsider the matter and you wrote to me on the 7th April suggesting a formula for defence.

ALL MUST BE DONE

In this letter you said, "As the Working Committee have fully understood, it is impossible to make **any** change in the existing constitution during the period of hostilities "The Working Committee's attitude in the matter has been completely misunderstood and I should like to clear this up, although we are not immediately concerned with it. The Committee do not think that there is any ⁱⁿterferent difficulty in the way of constitutional changes during the war. Everything that helps in the war not only can be but must be done, and done with speed. That is the only way to carry on to win a war. No complicated enactments are necessary. A recognition of India's freedom and right to self-determination could easily be made, if it was so wished together with certain order consequential but important changes. Rest can be left to future arrangements and adjustments. I might remind you that the British Prime Minister actually proposed a union of France and England on the eve of the fall of

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France. No greater or more fundamental change could be imagined, and this was suggested at a period of grave crisis and peril. War accelerates change, it does not fit in with static conceptions.

UNABLE TO ACCEPT

The Formula for defence that you sent us was considered by us together with its annexure which gave a list of subjects ^{or} ~~of~~ departments which were to be transferred to the defence department. This list was a revealing one as it proved that the Defence Minister would deal ^{with} ~~with~~ relatively unimportant matters. We were unable to accept this and we informed you accordingly.

Subsequently, a new formula for defence was suggested to us but without any list of subjects. This formula seemed to us to be based on a more healthy approach and we suggested certain changes pointing out that our ultimate decision would necessarily depend on the allocation of subjects. A revised formula was then sent back to us together with an indication of the functions of the War Department. This was so widely and comprehensively framed that it was difficult for us to know what the actual allocation of subjects and departments, as between the Defence Department and the War Department would be. A request was made on our behalf that illustrative lists of these subjects might be supplied to enable us to consider the matter. No such lists were supplied to us. In the interview we had with you yesterday we discussed the new formula and expressed ^{ed} our view-point in regard ~~the~~ to it. I need not repeat what I said then. The working of the formula is after all a minor matter and we would not allow that to come in our way, unless some important principle is at stake. But behind that wording lay certain ideas and we were surprised to find that during the past few-days we had been proceeding on wrong assumptions.

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When we asked you for illustrative lists of subjects for the two departments. You referred us to the old list for the Defence Department which you had previously sent us and which we had been unable to accept. You added that certain residuary subjects might be added to this but, in effect, there was not likely to be any such subject as the allocation was complete. Thus, you said, that substantially there was no change between the old list and any new one that might be prepared. If this was so, and we were to go back ultimately to the place we started from, then what was the purpose of our searching for new formulae? A new set of words meaning the same thing made no difference.

NEW PICTURE

In the course of our talks many other matters were also cleared up, unfortunately to our disadvantage. You had referred both privately and in the course of public statements to a National Government and a "Cabinet" consisting of "ministers". These words have a certain significance and we had imagined that the new government would function with full powers as a Cabinet, with the Viceroy acting as a constitutional head. But the new picture that ^{you} placed before ^{us} was really not very different from the old, the difference being one of degree and not of kind. The new government could neither be called, except vaguely and inaccurately, nor could it function as a National Government. It would just be the Viceroy and his Executive council with the Viceroy having all his old powers. We did not ask for any legal changes but we did ask for definite assurances and conventions which would indicate that the new government would function as a free government the members of which act as members of the cabinet in a constitutional government. In regard to the conduct of the war and connected activities the Commander-in-Chief would have freedom, and he would also act as War Minister.

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We were informed that nothing can be said at this stage, even vaguely and generally, about the conventions that should govern the new Government and the Viceroy. This was a matter in the Viceroy's discretion and at later stage, it could be discussed directly with the Viceroy. Ultimately there was always the possibility of the members of the Executive Council resigning or threatening to resign if they disagreed with the Viceroy. That action or remedy is of course always open, but it is curious that we should base our approach to a new Government on the probability of conflict and resignation at the very outset.

INDIA OFFICE TO DISAPPEAR

The picture therefore placed before us is not essentially different from the old one. The whole object which we and I believe, you have in view - that is to create a new psychological approach to the people, to make them feel that their own National Government had come, that they were defending their newly-won freedom - would be completely frustrated when they saw this old picture again, with even the old labels on. The continuation of the India office, which has been a symbol of evil to us, would confirm this picture. It has almost been taken for granted for some time past that the India Office would soon disappear as it was an anachronism. But now we are told that even this undesirable relic of a past age is going to continue.

The picture of the Government, which was so like the old in all essential features is such that we cannot fit into it. Normally, we would have had little difficulty in disposing of this matter for it is so far removed from all that we have striven for, but in the circumstances of to-day we were prepared to give full consideration to every proposal which might lead to an effective organisation of the defence of India. The peril that faces India affects us more than it can possibly

Monday, April 13, 1942

affect any foreigner, and we are anxious and eager to do our utmost to face it and overcome it. But we cannot undertake responsibilities when we are not given the freedom and power to shoulder them effectively and when an old environment continues which hampers the National effort.

YET PREPARED TO ASSUME
RESPONSIBILITY

While we cannot accept the proposals you have made we want to inform you that we are yet prepared to assume responsibility, provided a truly National Government is formed. We are prepared to put aside for the present all questions about the future, through, as we have indicated, we hold definite views about it. But in the present, the National Government must be a Cabinet Government with full power and must not merely be a continuation of the Viceroy's Executive Council. In regard to defence we have already stated what, in our opinion, the position should be at present. We feel that such an arrangement is the very minimum that is essential for functioning of a National Government and for making the popular appeal which is urgently needed.

We would point out to you that the suggestions we have put forward are not ours only but may be considered to be the unanimous demand of the Indian people. On these matters there is no difference of opinion among various groups and parties, and the difference is as between the Indian people as a whole and the British Government. Such differences as exist in India relate to constitutional changes in the future. We are agreeable to the postponement of this issue so that the largest possible measure of unity might be achieved in the present crisis for the defence of India. It would be a tragedy that even when there is this

ay, April 13, 1942

unanimity of opinion in India, the British Government
~~XXXX~~ should prevent a free National Government from
functioning, and from serving the cause of India as
well as the larger causes for which millions are
suffering and dying to-day.

Yours Sincerely,

Sd/- A. K. Azad.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps.
3, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi.

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Sunday,
April 26, 1942

PAINED AT C. R.'S ATTITUDE
MAULANA AZAD

President To Discharge Duty Undeterred

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has issued the following statement on the resolution recently passed by the Madras Congress Legislatures' Party :-

"It greatly astonished and pained me that a man like Mr. Rajagopalachari, in spite of his being a member of the Congress Working Committee, should have adopted such an attitude. I am in communication with him.

"I would assure you that any personal relationship howsoever dear to me, cannot deter me for a moment from discharging my duty as a President of the Congress.

"I may point out in this connection that in the Congress organisation only the Provincial Congress Committee is the competent body to represent provincial views - not the Congress Legislatures' Party. Despite this fact, the party itself was not fully represented in the meeting. The information about the meeting indicates that out of 191 Congress members of both the Houses only 52 attended the meeting. And when votes were taken only 36 participated in the voting. It clearly shows that it would be wrong to attribute the decision to the majority of the Congressmen of the Province.

- (A.P.)

uesday, April 28, 1942

C.R.'S RECENT ACTION

WHY OBJECTIONABLE

Congress President's Criticism

ALLAHABAD, April 26

Amplifying his criticism of the resolutions adopted by the Madras Congress Legislature Party, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, in an interview pointed out that the resolutions were objectionable on two counts. Firstly, Mr. Rajagopalachariar as a member of the Congress Working Committee should have waited till he had an opportunity to place before his colleagues in the Working Committee any fresh new materials in his possession, which he thought necessitated the decision contained in the resolutions. Mr. Rajagopalachariar, continued the Maulana, would not have had long to wait as the Working Committee was meeting within three or four days of the Madras Legislature Party's decision.

If Mr. Rajagopalachari thought that unconditional office-acceptance was desirable for the province of Madras or for that matter for any other province, he should have apprised the Working Committee of that desire and the reasons therefor.

Secondly the Maulana was at a loss to understand how on principle the A.I.C.C. could suddenly change the whole course of Congress policy and expect the Congress Organisation to accept and carry out that change particularly when as it appeared at present there was only a small section of Congress opinion in one province in favour of any change. - (A.P.).

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Thursday, April 30, 1942

WHY THE CRIPPS PROPOSALS WERE REJECTED

Congress President Explains

"We Went Too Far To Secure A Settlement"

BRITAIN'S LACK OF TRUST IN INDIA

A.I.C.C. Endorses And Approves Decision Of Working
Committee

ALLAHABAD, April 29

MAULANA AZAD'S SPEECH

Maulana Azad in his opening speech, said
'Last time we met at Wardha on January 15.. Three months have passed. The War is now drawing closer to India and both the fronts of India - the land and sea frontiers - are now threatened. Singapore, which was supposed to be an impregnable base, has fallen. Then came Rangoon's turn. The war is now reaching our shores. Where do we find ourselves in this changing shape of things ?

"We were told that the British Government was making a new approach to the Indian situation. It was announced that Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet, was being sent to India. Sir Stafford was not new to us. His arrival raised hopes throughout the world and in India too. The Working Committee was called and decided that I should meet him and should call the Working Committee to consider the proposals only if I thought it necessary."

TALKS WITH CRIPPS

After recapitulating his interviews with Sir Stafford Cripps, Maulana Azad said that the Draft Declaration contained extensive paragraphs about the future. The future was so uncertain that in weighing the proposals the Congress had to see what was the decision about the present. But one thing had been made clear and it was that the country had been denied power over its own defence.

sday, April 30, 1942

The Maulana said that Sir Stafford Cripps had in his talks, told him definitely that the form of the present Government would be that of a national Government and the position of the Viceroy vis-a-vis the national Government would be the same as that of the King in relation to the Cabinet. He had pointed out to Sir Stafford at the very outset that the main purpose of his mission should be the settlement of the political issue only and that other issues like the communal question and the question of the States would not be relevant at that stage and they were to be settled by the Indians themselves. Sir Stafford, said Maulana Azad, had agreed and in fact pointed out that he (Sir Stafford) himself had taken this line before the War Cabinet.

"This picture", continued Maulana Azad "gradually disappeared from our sight and Sir Stafford finally gave such a different shape to the picture that we could by no stretch of the imagination even care to look at it".

IMPORTANCE OF DEFENCE

"Defence is of primary importance at this moment", continued Maulana Azad. "It is defence that matters most when we have been drawn so close to war."

"The British attitude towards the Indian situation ever since the outbreak of the war has been such that we ^{found} find ourselves in a difficult position. We have made it clear to the country and to the world at large that if ever a conciliatory spirit was necessary for a settlement we showed it. We went far in our efforts - in fact, too far - to secure a settlement - but it is clear that the British Government have no trust in us. They are not prepared to leave our defence in our own hands. This is a question of national self-respect.

"A necessary concomitant of the position taken up by us in relation to the Cripps proposals was that we would be prepared to participate actively in the war. It

Thursday, April 30, 1942

is known that some members of the Working Committee are with Mahatma Gandhi in their support of out and out non-violence. But I am proud to say that, throughout the two weeks of our negotiations with ^{Sir}~~Sri~~ Stafford Cripps, they took up a wonderfully conciliatory attitude and they made it clear that they would consistently with their position of non-violence, do their best to assist us. I have nothing but praise for them and I want to make it clear that our decisions were unanimous (cheers)".

Maulana Azad said that ^{Sir}~~Sri~~ Stafford Cripps had made it plain that the India Office as such would not continue but that later on, this point also disappeared.

COMMUNAL QUESTION

Continuing Maulana Azad said : "It would be wrong to say that we considered the Cripps proposals without having formed in our minds a picture of the solution of the communal and other questions. Our stand was clear. As far as the Cripps mission was concerned we were considering the political issues only. I emphasise here that we would have produced a successful solution of the communal and other questions ~~within~~ within twenty hours of a settlement if that settlement was reached with ^{Sir}~~Sri~~ Stafford Cripps".

It would be entirely untrue to say that the Cripps mission had succeeded in making the Indian leaders change their hearts as far as the country's attitude towards the war was concerned. This was hinted even in the House of Commons debate yesterday. But I want to make it very plain that it would be absolutely incorrect to say that even though the Cripps mission had not been successful in what it had **set** out to do, it had succeeded in changing our attitude to the fundamental issue, namely that only a free India can defend herself (cheers).

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"Sir Stafford Cripps has emphasised at Karachi and on his return to London that the initiative in dealing with the Indian situation will not now come from the British Government but I want to make it plain that no further initiative step will be taken from the Congress side either." declared the Maulana.

As the evening ~~were~~ on the amphitheatre was lit by flood-lights and by a number of flares burning from bowls placed on top of columns erected around the ground.

JAPANESE THREAT

Referring to the Japanese threat from the East the Maulana said that only a slavish mind could imagine that Japan would give us freedom. "If any Indian says that we should welcome the Japanese, then all that I can say is that his mentality is a slave's mentality which can think only in terms of change of masters and never in terms of his own freedom. Our differences with Britain should not drive us to welcoming the Japanese or any other aggressor. It does not matter if it is an "active welcome" or a "silent welcome". I warn you especially against what I have termed "silent welcome" to aggressors. We will stand on our own legs. We can rely only on that freedom which we will win with our own ~~effort~~ ^{efforts}. We will not tolerate any aggressor though he ~~says~~ says that he is coming to give us freedom."

WEAPON OF NON-VIOLENCE

"The weapon of non-violence is with us and we will use it if faced with any aggressor. We would have taken up armed defence, but that has been denied us. The weapon of non-violence has been with us for the last twenty-two years and no one can take it away from us.

Thursday, April 30, 1942

A member of the A.I.C.C. at this point asked :
Does this mean that you advocate non-violence not as a principle but because we have been denied armed defence ?

Maulana Azad : No. This has been made clear by the last meeting of the A.I.C.C. at Wardha. We made it clear that we could take up armed defence only if our national demands were satisfied and we had a national government.

In ~~the~~ conclusion the Maulana said that in view of the critical situation and the grave issues before them he would request the members to make their speeches brief and said that he might sometimes have to ask members to confine their speeches to bare essentials.

The Maulana made a reference to the death of Seth Jammalal Bajaj and paid a tribute to his sterling patriotism and sacrifice. The President spoke for a hour and half.

The Committee passed, all members standing, a resolution of condolence on Seth Jammalal's death which was moved from the chair.

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iday, May 1, 1942

WAR AND PEOPLE'S DUTY

Congress Working Committee Discussions

ALLAHABAD, April 30.

After this morning's session of the Working Committee, Maulana Azad informed pressmen that the main resolution about the war and what people should do to meet it was still under discussion but that he expected to release to the press this evening one or two resolutions which were being considered in this connection.

He explained that it might be necessary to have more than one resolution outlining the policy and the practical measures which the Congress have in mind.

The A.I.C.C., he said, would after this evening's meeting probably have to meet to-morrow morning and again in the evening.

The Working Committee is resuming at 2 this afternoon. Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar will attend. - (A.P.).

FLAG HOISTING CEREMONY

MAULANA AZAD'S WARNING TO AGGRESSOR NATIONS

ALLAHABAD, April 30

"Some aggressor nations have designs to fly their flags on our soil but we will prevent that even at the cost of our lives", observed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, hoisting the Congress flag on the All India Congress Committee pandal grounds this morning in the presence of members of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. men and women Congress volunteers and a large gathering of other spectators. The proceedings began with the singing of the "Bande Mataram."

"~~One~~ flag is too firmly planted in our hearts for any other flag to take its place. It is a great pity that our flag has not yet taken its rightful place in the country but I assure you it will soon come into its own", concluded the Maulana. - (A.P.).

A.I.C.C. REJECTS MADRAS RESOLUTION

NO VIVISECTION OF INDIA

RIGHT PROCEDURE TO SOLVE PROBLEM

Maulana Azad Suggests Meeting of Congress and
League Representatives

Allahabad, May 2.

PAKISTAN AGAINST SPIRIT OF ISLAM

The A.I.C.C. met this morning, Maulana Azad presiding, to consider the Madras resolutions.

Maulana Azad, in his opening remarks stated :-

" I have some points to put before you. Firstly as is clear from my press statements also, the Working Committee acts like a Cabinet. We hold discussion and come to our decisions and once a decision is taken we stick to it. If any member disagrees keenly with a decision, it is incumbent upon him to sever his connection with the Working Committee. As I have said before, Mr. Rajagopalachariar, as a member of the Working Committee, should not have sprung a surprise on us but should have waited till he could have placed his point of view before the Working Committee first. When I mentioned this thing in the Working Committee itself Mr. Rajagopalachariar agreed with this view of mine. He said he had arrived at his decision after mature consideration and could not resile from it. I had under the circumstances regretfully to accept Mr. Rajagopalachariar's resignation from the Working Committee."

Maulana Azad said that another non-official resolution moved by Mr. Jagatnarain Lal had a relevance in connection with the Madras resolutions and as such he would, as a special case, allow this resolution to be moved after Mr. Rajagopalachari had put his point of view before the House. Then general discussion would follow.

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3, 1942

✓Rajaji's speech appeared in the
Amrita Bazar Patrika dt.3-5-42-
Page 7.7

MAULANA AZAD'S CRITICISM

Maulana Azad then made these concluding remarks :

"Rajaji has put his point of view before us. He believes that the Congress-League differences are harmful to the cause of the country and should be ended. On this, I say, there could not be two opinions in this House. We also feel the same way. But I am astonished that if Rajaji had this end in view he should have adopted the procedure he did. In fact I feel that the method and procedure adopted by Rajaji have done the greatest harm to this cause and I hold Rajaji fully responsible for it.

"Rajaji of all persons", continued the Maulana who was in the inner counsels of the Congress knew all about the attempt made by us for the solution of those differences. I have personally done my best in that direction. For five years I made attempt after attempt. Some of the matters have come to your knowledge. But there are some which have not been told by me to anybody, because I thought it would be better to tell them if something definite had turned up. I left nothing undone. I declare that those who had the reins of the Muslim League in their hands built up an impenetrable wall against the Congress.

IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION

"I met Mr. Jinnah twice. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru corresponded with him and Gandhiji also met Mr. Jinnah. Gandhiji did his best. Sometimes, public opinion was even against us for this persistence of ours. Then an impossible situation arose. Firstly, our history of the past fifty years or so was to be obliterated and the Congress was to reduce itself to a Hindu body only. Secondly, we were to recognise the claim that the Muslim League was the sole representative of Muslims. These premises were impossible and nothing could be achieved with them.

, 1942.

To-day the Congress has large numbers of Muslims as members. But that is not the question. Even if there was not a single Muslim, Sikh or Christian in Congress, the Congress so long as it takes a national stand and watches national interests represents the whole nation and is not a communal or sectional body. The result of this attitude was that we were lost in these preliminaries and we could not get down to the real problem."

THE CORRECT PROCEDURE

The Maulana continued that he had suggested through Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan at the time of the Karachi session of the Muslim League that the League should nominate five representatives and they could then sit together and thrash out the whole situation. That would be the correct procedure. He always thought that the attempt would be worth making even if it did not achieve success. There would not result any harm ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ from it.

The question concerns the whole country", said the Maulana. "Personalities and sentiments do not count. It is a matter concerning the entire nation.

"Rajaji's method is wrong and would harm the very cause which he is advocating. It is not a question of somebody putting up a demand and our conceding it. As I have said the correct procedure would be to nominate representatives and to discuss the questions involved. Even now I am prepared to call the Working Committee and ask them to nominate five ^{to meet five representatives} representatives of the Muslim League to find a settlement."

"Pakistan is against the spirit of Islam," declared Maulana Azad. It could not be said that one part of a country where the Muslims happened to be in a majority was "Pak" and the other parts were "Napak".

WHOLE THING KEPT VAGUE

"The details of Pakistan have not been clarified. If Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan^{is} asked, he says one thing, Mr. Jinnah says something else and the resolution itself means something else. The whole thing has been kept vague. In a case like this, of what is a responsible organisation like ours to take note?"

Maulana Azad said it was wrong for any political party to strike up attitude which would be like a dead-weight on political advance. It would be wrong to say: "This is our demand and if it is not allowed we will have nothing to do with you."

Referring to misapprehensions that there might exist as regards the Muslims in the provinces, the Maulana said that as early as the Ramgarh session he had made it clear in his Presidential address that what he contemplated was a Central Government and provincial autonomous units so constituted that the Central Government would exercise the least interference with the internal autonomy of the provinces.

Before declaring the session closed, Maulana Azad thanked the Organising Committee for the satisfactory arrangements they had made for the comfort of the members. He praised the simple but impressive decorations of the open air amphi-theatre and the arrangements made to make the place as cool as possible in the oppressive heat. He said it would be invidious to mention names.

The Maulana said he had been much impressed by the discipline and organisation shown by those in the management and the volunteers. He said he was convinced of this from the very moment of his reception at the railway station.

"Such a wonderful display of discipline is gratifying," concluded the President, "not only because discipline is the soul of our organization but also for its importance in a nation's life". --- - (A.P.)

Saturday, May 9, 1942

AZAD'S REPLY TO AMERY

BANNED RESOLUTIONS

Not A Single Phrase Misrepresents Facts

In a statement to the Press, the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad refers to the reply given by Mr. L.S. Amery, Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons with regard to the banned resolutions of the Congress Working Committee and says that if the Government would be prepared to let him know what parts of the resolutions were based on unverified rumours or misrepresented facts and convinced him that the information in their possession was incorrect, he would unhesitatingly express regret on behalf of the Working Committee and withdraw the resolutions.

The Maulana, however, "affirmed with the fullest sense of responsibility" that not a single phrase of the resolutions is either based on unverified rumours ~~or~~ or misrepresents facts.

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Monday, May 12, 1942

CONGRESS PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE TO
MR. AMERY

BANNED RESOLUTIONS OF CONGRESS

'Not A Single Phrase Is Based On Unverified Rumours
Or Misrepresented Facts'

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Congress President has issued the following statement a short summary of which appeared in our Saturday's issue :-

The statement of Mr. L.S. Amery about the banned resolutions of the Congress Working Committee though surprisingly irresponsible, has worked no feeling of surprise in me. We are now sufficiently accustomed to hear such things.

Replying to a question Mr. Amery said : "These resolutions which were reached on gross misrepresentation of facts or on unverified rumour criticised in unbridled terms the recent actions of the military and civil authorities in India and Burma. They were calculated - and to judge by their language, were, I think, deliberately calculated - to undermine, public confidence in the Government and the armed forces."

But I affirm with the fullest sense of responsibility that not a single phrase of the resolutions is either based on unverified rumours or misrepresented facts. Whatever it said ~~It~~ is based on solid facts derived from the most responsible and reliable sources.

Regarding the last charge I would like to say how could the Congress attempt to undermine a thing which does not exist. But the confidence can easily be created, ~~As~~ at least in this matter, if the Government of India is prepared to adopt a simple course. Neither any member of the Congress Working Committee nor myself have any desire to insist on the occurrence of the deplorable facts mentioned in the resolutions about Malaya and Burma.

uesday, May 12, 1942

AZAD'S OFFER

I would be the first man to welcome the non-occurrence of the events, if any one of them is proved to be incorrect or based on rumours. I, therefore, asked the Government whether ^{it is} prepared to let me know what part of the resolutions are based on unverified rumours, or misrepresented facts; and give me a chance to lay the information which I have in my possession before it ? If it is prepared to adopt this course and convince me that our information is incorrect, I would unhesitatingly express regret on behalf of the working committee and withdraw the resolutions.

Are the Government of India and the Secretary of state prepared to accept ^{the} ~~the~~ offer" ?.. (A.P.)

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May 15, 1942

INDIA'S HEART WITH CHINA

BROTHERHOOD OF MANKIND

Maulana Azad's Message To Chinese Muslims

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President has sent a reply to the message of goodwill sent by the Islamic National Salvation Federation of China through its representative Mr. Othman K.H. Woo. In forwarding his letter to the President of the Federation, General Omar Pal Cheng Hsi, the Maulana has also presented the latter with two parts of his work "Tarjumanul Qur'an". The Maulana's letter reads as follows :-

"Dear General Omar Pal Cheng Hsi, I have received your kind letter through Mr. Othman K.H. Woo. You, as the President of the Islamic National Salvation Federation, have sent a message of love and good-will, which has deeply impressed me and my people. I have the honour to present to you the sincerest sentiments of cordial gratefulness on behalf of myself and my people.

It was an occasion of utmost pleasure to have met your great leader, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, I found in his personality a great man of our times who is moulding the destiny of a great nation; and the world with all its obstacles cannot ~~and~~ dare to shake his indomitable courage and determination. It is a matter of great honour to fight the war of independence and democracy under the banner of such a great leader. I cordially congratulate your great nation for it, and assure you that India's heart and mind is with you in ^{this} ~~the~~ struggle.

That part of your letter specially delighted me where you say, 'We Muslims should particularly develop our spirit of struggle and sacrifice in accordance with the instructions of Islam. On the shoulders of the Muslims lies the responsibility for maintaining the

May, May 15, 1942

sacred world peace and the protection of the freedom and order of mankind."

How correctly you have interpreted the teaching of Islam. There is nothing more to add. Undoubtedly, the fundamental spirit of Islamic teaching demands from every Muslim to be the standard bearer of Human equality and democracy in the world. In the 7th Century A.C. when Europe was plunged in the darkness of the middle ages, and all the nations of the East had lost the torch of knowledge and justice, it was Islam that gave the message of fraternity and equality to mankind and emancipated them from the bondage of social and religious narrowness under which they were suffering. Brotherhood of mankind and fatherhood of God is the basic spirit of Islam.

Yes, the Muslims of India are very much delighted to know that our Chinese co-religionists are fighting shoulder to shoulder with their countrymen for their country's cause and that there is no discord between the various groups of the country. This attitude of the Chinese Muslims is undoubtedly quite in consonance with the teachings of the social religion. The spirit of Islam wants to unite man with man in every walk of life, it does not tend to create dissention.

I was very glad to have met your able representative Mr. Othman M.H. Woo. I hope he will leave a similar impression wherever he goes on his noble mission in the various Islamic countries. " - (A.P.)

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7, May 18, 1942

CONGRESS & CIVIL PROTECTION
VOLUNTEERS' DUTY

Maulana Azad Explains At Calcutta Rally

Two rallies of volunteer corps raised by the Congress Civil Protection Committee were held in Calcutta on Sunday, one in Central Calcutta and other in South Calcutta. About a thousand volunteers participated in these demonstrations which were witnessed among others, by the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Addressing the demonstrations, Maulana Azad explained to them the Congress's self-protection and self-sufficiency programme. He laid special emphasis on the distinguishing characteristics of a volunteer, namely, character and courage, which, he thought, were the two most essential things in carrying out successfully the task of a member of the Congress volunteer corps, especially in emergencies of the type at present threatening. He exhorted everyone connected with the corps to see that in respect of courage and fortitude they were never found wanting when called upon to serve their countrymen. In particular, he stressed, in the organisation to which they belonged numbers did not count. What do count was the spirit of service and sacrifice of each individual volunteer.

Those who attended the demonstration, included Mr. S. Labanya Prova Dutta and Mr. Kalipada Mukherjee, Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee. Mr. Bhupati Majumder, Secretary of the Congress Civil Protection Committee, Mr. Narendra Nath Sen, Secretary of the Central Congress Committee, Mr. Satyanarayan Misra, Secretary of the Barrabazar District Congress Committee and Mr. Shamsul Huq and Mr. Depin Bihari Ganguly, Councillors of the Calcutta Corporation.

Tuesday, June 9, 1942

CONGRESS & U.P. GOVT. RECENT ACTIONS

Maulana Azad Condemns Aggressive Attitude

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement :

The U.P. Government has recently adopted an aggressive attitude towards the Congress and there is a growing feeling in the people that something is developing behind the screen. Only a few days ago, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai^a was arrested under the Defence of India Rules, and now Mr. S.K. Paliwal, President, U.P. Provincial Congress Committee has been arrested at Agra and Mr. Mahabir Tyagi at Dehra Dun. Other workers of the province have also been arrested during the last few days. It is impossible for the public to guess even a distant justification for these arrests. Full six months have not elapsed when the prison doors were opened to Mr. Kidwai and Pandit Paliwal, and certainly they were not released because they were considered to be dangerous. One fails to understand what has happened during the last six months that they have become as dangerous as not to be considered fit to breathe air of freedom. Now-a-days the whole Congress organisation is busy in one work, viz., the programme of self-protection and self-sufficiency. Surely we should not be forced to infer that the standard of U.P. Government's judgment is so curious that even these activities of the Congress cannot be spared from the grip of the Defence of India Rules.

ACTION AGAINST "NATIONAL HERALD"

The Security of the "National Herald" amounting to six thousand rupees has been forfeited and a fresh security of twelve thousand has now been demanded. Moreover, it is still fresh in our minds in what manner the office of the All-India Congress Committee was searched. It was not only considered necessary to take away the copies

Tuesday, June 9, 1942

of the banned resolutions, but also other papers of the office. Even the typewriting and cyclostyling machines were considered to be dangerous to be left in the office. What does all this mean? It is necessary that we should know where we are standing. Personally my mind is quite clear about the present attitude of the Congress. I do not want to take any step under the present circumstances, which might help the aggressor in any way, I want the whole Congress organisation to devote itself to the programme of self protection and self-sufficiency. We have no other way ~~XXXX~~ before us.

But if the Provincial Governments are let loose to adopt such an aggressive attitude, then it is obvious that our wishes would be of no avail. The march of events would itself shape the future, and the attitude of Government would be responsible for the results which would naturally follow.

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Tuesday, June 30, 1942

PROSECUTION OF SJ. B. DAS

ORDERS CRITICISED

Maulana Azad on Orissa Situation

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement :-

It was stated in the newspapers a few days ago that the Government of Orissa has issued orders for the prosecution of Shri Biswanath Das, ex-Premier of Orissa. The news of his arrest has not yet been received. If Mr. Das has been arrested, it would be a new link in that chain of events which are consecutively occurring in the Province. A Ministry has been formed which lacks the support of the majority. The whole province is impatient to throw away this uncouth burden. As there could be no constitutional method to support this unconstitutional procedure, all sorts of tactics are being used to gain time to save the Ministry. In order to ^{gauge}~~judge~~ existing situation properly, it would be sufficient to give a passing look to the events of the last few months.

PAST EVENTS

At the time of the resignation of the Congress Ministry in 1939, the total strength of its members was 37 in a house of 60. Out of the remaining members 4 were nominated and 18 independent members. One seat was vacant owing to the death of a member. In November, 1941, 7 members of the Congress Party deserted, joined the rest numbering 22 under the leadership of the Maharajah of Parlakimedi and formed a Ministry. When the Ministry was formed the Premier in a statement to the Press said that he would call a session of the Assembly within 6 weeks. But the session was not called till the second week of February, 1942. Before the Assembly met 2 members of the Congress Committee were arrested under the Defence of India Rules, and were sentenced to various terms of

Tuesday, Jun 30, 1942

imprisonment. The charges were prejudicial acts for impeding war efforts and creating disaffection against the Government. In appeal before the Sessions Judge all the accused have been acquitted on the charge of prejudicial act against war effort, though conviction on the ~~charge~~ charge of creating disaffection against Government stands. In one case where order for bail could be secured from the High Court, the release on bail was delayed by 2 days, so that the member could not attend the voting on demands on the budget in the Assembly. In the meantime one of the deserters from the Congress Party had resigned, and the pending bye-election was successfully contested and won by the Congress against heavy odds. The position of parties, on the last day of the Assembly on the 31st March was as follows : Congress 29 (plus 1 Speaker), Ministerialist 29 and one seat vacant. In the morning of April 1st one member of Ministerialist Party died, which reduced their number to 28 as against 30 of the Congress and leaving 1 seat for bye-elections.

DEMANDS ON ASSEMBLY SESSION

On April 18 the Leader of the Congress Party, Mr. Biswanath Das, wrote a letter to the Governor asking him to convene the Assembly meeting. The letter was merely acknowledged and no reply has been forthcoming in spite of reminder.

On the 27th of May 2 members of the Ministerialist Party resigned their membership of the Party, as they did not want to continue supporting the Ministry, thus reducing the strength of the party in power to 26 only. On the 3rd June the Leader of the Congress Party wrote a second letter to the Governor along with letters from 28 members of the Party. The letter has not been acknowledged so far, and no information is available if the Assembly is to be convened at all or not. Bye-elections to the ^{vacant} ~~vacant~~ seats are not being held. Although Mr. Das has not received any reply to his letter from the Governor, yet in a sense he has received one. He has been informed that he

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is about to be arrested.

This is the new popular Government of Orissa, which has received the blessings of the Viceroy, and about which the Secretary of State for India was so jubilant in ~~the~~ the House of Commons.

Although the credit of exhibiting this curious farce of constitution lies with the Governor of Orissa, we must not ~~forget~~ the Government of India. The real credit goes to them ^{alone} ~~along~~. - (U.P.)

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Wednesday, July 8, 1942.

Wardhaganj, July 7.

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ELECTION OF DELEGATES

Explaining the Working Committee's resolution regarding election of delegates Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President said to the United Press representative :-
"Ever since my release from jail, I have been considering the question of normal working of the Congress constitution. Bardoli, Wardha and Allahabad meetings were devoted to more urgent and important issues with the result that this matter was hanging fire. Now the Working Committee unanimously decided that the Congress machinery should work in normal manner, and hence this decision. It does not necessarily mean that there would be a Congress session, but if the situation so warrants, we might call the session which was not held since Ramgarh."

Maulana Azad also told the United Press that he had received Mr. Bhulabhai Desai's letter of resignation from the Congress Working Committee only yesterday noon. It mentions that his state of health does not permit him to continue as a member.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST C.R.

Regarding representations for disciplinary action against Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Sankharurthi, the Congress President said the matter rested with Provincial Congress Committees. The matter could come before the Working Committee only on appeal against their decision.

..... - (A.P. & U.P.)

Monday, July 13, 1942.

CONGRESS AND THE "NEXT STEP"

HOW WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH CAN BE
EFFECTED

DIFFERENCES BEING NARROWED DOWN.

Wardha, July 12.

Further discussion on Mahatma Gandhi's draft resolution, on the present political situation and the "next step" with particular reference to some of the objections raised yesterday against the draft, took place to-day at the Congress Working Committee Meeting. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad told the 'Associated Press' that the general discussion was still going on and he hoped that the Committee would conclude its deliberations by Tuesday evening.

As a result of yesterday's discussion, it appears that a "last-minute hitch" has arisen regarding the final form of the resolution.

Further discussion is being held with a view to seeing how differences can be reconciled and a formula acceptable to both the Gandhian and Nehru groups can be evolved.

DIFFERENCES NARROWED DOWN

It is understood that the reported differences in the Committee, which mainly relate to the manner of approach and the steps by which the "withdrawal" could be effected, have narrowed down to some extent.

While all members are reported to be unanimous regarding the fundamentals, there appears to be a certain amount of differences of opinion regarding the details. This difference takes the usual old form, namely that while the Gandhian group is prepared to accept Mahatma Gandhi's draft resolution without any alterations or amendments, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, are reported to be inclined to the view that the issue must be made purely a political one, consistent with their opposition to all Fascist aggression and support of the democracies, particularly China and Russia.

To-morrow is Mahatma Gandhi's day of silence, and he will, therefore, not be present at the meeting. It is understood that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad will meet Mahatma Gandhi at Sewagram in the afternoon, when the draft will be revised in the light of the discussions that have already taken place.

— (A.F.)

Wednesday, July 15, 1942.

AZAD INTERVIEWED

"IMPOSSIBLE TO WAIT AND WATCH PASSIVELY"

Varanasi, July 14.

Emphasising that the resolution of the Congress Working Committee was a unanimous one, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Congress President in an interview to the Associated Press stated that the Committee had two main problems to tackle, one relating to the achievement of political independence and the other to meet the present situation.

He said that events had reached such a stage that it had become impossible for the Congress to wait and watch passively. For nine days the Committee discussed the resolution in all its aspects to see what should be done and in what form to meet the present situation. He considered the defence of India as of paramount importance and only India's Independence would enable her to play her part effectively in the defence of the country. It may be possible to wait for the final achievement of India's Independence but India's obligations to her defence could not wait. This point had been made clear in the resolution.

WARNING TO GOVT.

He said there should be no room for any misunderstanding and hoped that British Government and the Allied ~~would~~ nations would appreciate the position of the Congress. He denied that the resolution was an ultimatum and said that it was only a reiteration of the national demand though there was a warning to the British Government in it. The Maulana added, "whatever shape the proposed movement takes it will be a mass movement. He reiterated that there was no longer any occasion for restatement of the Congress position vis-a-vis non-violence.

ednesday, July 15, 1942.

The Congress position was that India's defence could only be with the aid of armed forces. He had explained this position to Mahatma Gandhi who had appreciated the position of the Congress as such.

As for himself, he would not hesitate to introduce conscription in India, but the presence of the British in the country had made things impossible. — (A.F.)

Tuesday, July 21, 1942.

INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA

MUST BE RECOGNISED
MAULANA AZAD ON QUESTION OF NEGOTIATIONS

New Delhi, July 20.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President in an interview to the "Associated Press" replied to the question whether there was any basis for the impression prevailing in certain quarters after the statements made by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru that there was hardly any room left for any negotiation with the Congress.

"If", said the Maulana, "this refers to India's right of independence, it is certainly not a matter for negotiation. It is ^a fundamental ^{principle} ~~principal~~ which must be recognised by the United Nations. But, if the question refers to arrangements for the duration of the war there is a clear procedure envisaged in the resolution of the Working Committee itself, and there is no reason to suggest that there is no room for negotiation. ~~xxxxxxx~~ It is quite obvious to my mind that matters of ~~this~~ nature can only be settled by negotiation."

Q: Suppose there is a declaration on behalf of the United Nations guaranteeing India's independence, will it satisfy what you regard as the fundamental ^{principle} ~~principal~~ ?

Ans : It will depend entirely on the form and content of the declaration and, in any case, I can assure you that there is no reason why the Congress should not give the fullest consideration to any declaration of the kind you have mentioned.

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2day, July 27, 1942.

CONGRESS PROGRAMME

TO BE GIVEN FINAL SHAPE AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

Lahore, July 26.

Maulana Azad addressed in camera a joint meeting of the presidents and secretaries of the District Congress Committees in the Punjab, members of the Working Committee of P.P.C.C. and members of the Congress Assembly Party for about forty minutes this afternoon. Sardar Sohan Singh Josh, M.L.A., and Sardar Teja Singh Swatantar, M.L.A., the communist leaders were also present.

The Congress President is reported to have explained the implications of the Wardha resolution and exhorted the workers to be ready for the forthcoming programme of the Congress, the final shape to which, he added, would be given at the A.I.C.C. meeting.

Maulana Azad said that it was the first time that the Congress had addressed its resolution to the United Nations. If there was no response the Congress would be forced to launch its movement.

Before the meeting commenced a group of socialist workers demonstrated in front of the Lajpat Rai Hall demanding the expulsion of communists and Mian Iftikharuddin from the Congress. Maulana Sahib came out of the hall and advised the demonstrators not to raise shouts but make proper representations to him if they had any grievance against any Congress member.

Maulana Azad, left for Delhi to-night by Bhatinda Express. After staying in Delhi for a day he will proceed to Calcutta on Tuesday morning.

Interviewed by pressmen, Maulana Azad declined to comment on Sir Zafrullah Khan's statement that if the Wardha resolution was accepted and Britain agreed to act according to it, India would be occupied by Japan within a week after the British had withdrawn.

— (A.P.)

Wednesday, July 29, 1942.

THE CLIMAX OF PROPAGANDA

CRIPPS' BROADCAST
MAULANA AZAD EXPLAINS CONGRESS STAND

New Delhi, July 27.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, made the following statement at a Press Conference this evening :-

"I have carefully watched the reactions to the Working Committee's resolution and have come to the conclusion that in their anxiety to find fault with the Congress, adverse critics have completely ignored the frank analysis of the political situation and constructive proposals and only concentrated on the last paragraph, which hints at the consequences of the failure to take timely steps. In doing so they have overreached themselves by drawing a lurid picture of anarchy and chaos, particularly pleasing to those who would invade India. It is the height of unwisdom to use so sharp a double-edged weapon, for while it is intended to affect public opinion in America and China, it supplies the Axis propagandists with the very material they would wish for.

"Sir Stafford Cripps' broadcast to America marks the climax of this propaganda. He has studiously avoided the Working Committee's resolution, because it contains a complete answer to his entire argument. He has selected for his basis a phrase or two from Mahatma Gandhi's writings torn out of their context. Mahatma Gandhi will take care of these misrepresentations. But Sir Stafford Cripps has either misunderstood or deliberately misinterpreted the Congress point of view.

WHAT CONGRESS CABINET SAID

"Commenting on the failure of the Cripps negotiations the Working Committee has said that it has resulted in a sense of frustration and a rapid and widespread increase of

Wednesday, July 29, 1942.

ill-will against Britain. The Committee has expressed its anxiety to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma and it has desired to build up resistance to any aggression on, or invasion of, India by the Japanese or any foreign power. The Committee's much criticised resolution says : ' The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into good-will and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom. On the withdrawal of British rule from India the resolution visualises a "Provisional Government representative of all important sections of the people of India."

It further says: Representatives of Free India and representatives of 'Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as Allies in the common task of meeting aggression. It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British rule from India the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or ^{the} Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied powers. The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allied in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggressors and to protect and help China.'

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"How all this can be interpreted by Sir Stafford Cripps as a demand for 'walking out of India leaving this country without any constitutional form of Government and with no organised administration' passes one's comprehension. In fact what is visualised in this resolution is a stable Provisional Government as the immediate result.

GLARING MIS-STATEMENT

"Another glaring misstatement which he has permitted himself to broadcast to America is extremely disingenuous. Describing the form of Government which he offered to representative Indian political leaders, he calls the Viceroy's Executive Council : 'A body of Ministers like those who advise your President.' This analogy is as totally misleading as that other of the National Cabinet with which Sir Stafford Cripps tried to mislead India. If India's 'de facto' Independence were recognised and a President elected by the people of the country were at the helm of the State the analogy of American Ministers of State would be appropriate.

"Those who are trying to make out that the demand of India's independence is unreasonable in the midst of a war may pause to consider that Free India offers to throw its entire weight on the side of the Allies. Surely, the recognition and guarantee of Egypt's independence did not present any difficulty in the way of the Allied even though Egypt has remained neutral. But Free India is committed to full participation in the United Nations' fight for freedom and peace of the world.

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"The Congress has no illusion about the extent of the moral support which India's demand for Independence may receive from those who have so far been loud in their professions of sympathy. Ultimately India will have to depend entirely on such strength as she possesses for achieving her goal."

APPEAL TO UNITED NATIONS

Maulana Azad added : "I regard the Working Committee's resolution as an appeal to the United Nations to intervene on behalf of India. This is the first occasion in the history of the Congress that such an appeal has been made. The matter is no longer one between India and England but between India and the United Nations as the latter want to make India their operational base. India's right to Independence is not subject to negotiation. It is a fundamental principle. No change which is asked for will in any way affect the interests of the United Nations. In fact what is asked for guarantees India's full weight and support on behalf of the United Nations in the interests of the larger cause and the defence of India."

Replying to a question if Congress expected to form a Government immediately after the British withdraw, Maulana Azad said the Congress resolution was self-explanatory and if the principle of Indian Independence was accepted all other questions could be settled by negotiation. — (A.F.)

Friday, August 8, 1942.

"CONGRESS PLUNGING INTO STORMY
OCEAN"

MOMENTOUS SESSION OF A.I.C.C. OPENS
MAULANA AZAD EXPLAINS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
COMPLETE TRANSFER OF POWER

Bombay, Aug. 7.

INDIA AND MENACE OF AGGRESSION

After the minutes of the last meeting had been read by the Secretary, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President addressed the House.

... Opening the proceedings, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad referred to the Allahabad session of the A.I.C.C. and said that the decision taken thereⁿ was impelled by necessity. They might forget everything but they could not forget the decision taken then. On the failure of the Cripps mission the only course open to them was to take the decision reached at Allahabad, namely, that for the effective defence of the country against foreign aggression the^{only} course was to have the reins of the Government in Indian hands. When a nation was denied such authority it could not effectively resist foreign aggression.

FAST
DANGER ~~IS~~ APPROACHING

The menace of aggression to India was ever increasing and the danger which was only a distant one a few months ago was fast approaching them. In the face of such danger it would be a calamity to allow the people to remain fallen and down-hearted. The Congress wanted to see that every Indian youth took part in resisting aggression. If the people of India were indifferent and sullen the responsibility was not that of the Congress but that of the British Government. All appeals during the last three years to set up a National Government in India had been rejected by the British Government.

Sunday, August 8, 1942.

If events had been allowed by the British to take a different shape Indians would have been whole heartedly engaged in the war. The British attitude was one of not allowing Indians an opportunity to put their heart into the war in the service of humanity.

TWO ALTERNATIVES

In the circumstances, said Maulana Azad, there were two alternatives before the country. The first was to wait for the events that might happen. The second was to act and save the country from the threatened invasion.

In order to instil enthusiasm into the people, they must be made to feel that in participating in the war, they would be defending their own hearths and homes. One could not expect them to fight with sincerity unless they were sure that they were fighting for the protection for their own freedom.

The Congress, Maulana Azad emphasised, had already declared that its sympathies were with the democracies, but there was no other way of saving India than by bringing about a political change in the country.

INDIA AND WAR EFFORT

With the imminence of the danger from Japan it was no longer so much a question of India's freedom but of Indian protection. The fundamental test of the Congress demand if it was granted whether it would hamper the effective prosecution of the war. With all the responsibility which ~~xxxxxx~~ rested on him as Congress President he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the freedom would mean a new life in their war effort and the change would not endanger the cause of the United Nations. It must necessarily help the cause and the purpose of the war. It had to be remembered that what they

urday, August 8, 1942.

wanted was that the reins of Government should be in Indian hands. They did not demand the withdrawal of the allied forces although Independence would entitle India to demand withdrawal to such forces also from the country. But they did realise that such a demand was not practicable.

They wanted the successful termination of the war in favour of the democracies.

If conditions were different they would not have hesitated to demand the complete withdrawal of the British from India, even if it meant exposing the country to the dangers of anarchy and civil war. The demand which was being put forward for a political change in the country was not of such a nature as to upset civil administration and law and order. They wanted a change which would help the prosecution of the war and not bring about chaos. If fair-play and ^tjustice prevailed the British Government and their Allies would not find their demand such as would bring about chaos and disorder in the country. It was sheer travesty to interpret the Congress demand in the manner interpreted by Sir Stafford Cripps.

"QUIT INDIA" DEMAND

The Congress President explained that the "Quit India" demand did not mean the physical removal of all the Britishers from India. It only meant the transfer of political power to Indian hands. After the demand had been originally made by Mr. Gandhi both Pandit Nehru and himself had gone to Wardha to discuss the matter with Mr. Gandhi who made it clear to them that it only meant the transfer of power.

Saturday, August 8, 1942.

ACTION NOW

Continuing Maulana Azad said that events had reached such a pass that there was ^{no} to time either for threats or for promises. They must face facts and act instantly. The Congress did not want promises. The need of the hour was action and action right now on the part of the Congress as well as the British Government. Let the British Government sign India's Independence and simultaneously "we will sign our Agreement to the United Nations to fight along with them against all aggressors. He could say with all the emphasis at his command and speaking with the responsibility attached to the Congress Presidentship that they would be prepared to sign such an agreement. But were the intentions of the British Government honest? Were they willing to grant the Independence of India?

Concluding Maulana Azad said that the zero hour was fast approaching. They were making a final appeal to the British and to the United Nations and it was the duty of the latter to accept it if their eyes were not blind and their ears were not deaf. ~~xxx~~ (A.I.)

Thursday, November 2, 1944.

HOW DETAINED CONGRESS CABINET
REACTED TO SABOTAGE CHARGE

DR. MAHMUD RELEASES MOULANA AZAD'S LETTER TO
LORD LINLITHGOW

Wardha, Oct. 31.

AZAD'S LETTER

Ahmednagar Fort,
February, 13, 1943.

His Excellency The Marquis of Linlithgow, Viceroy's
House, New Delhi.

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

My colleagues and I have read in yesterday's and day
before yesterday's newspapers the recent correspondence that
had passed between you and Mahatma Gandhi. In the course of
your letter ^{to} Mahatma Gandhi numerous references have been
made to the Congress and repeated and far reaching charges
have been made against the Congress organisation. In your
letter of January 12 you express your regret that no word of
condemnation for the violence and crime ~~x~~ has come from the
Working Committee.

Ordinarily we would refrain from saying anything while
we are kept in detention cut off completely from our people
and the outside world. Even our place of detention is supposed
to be a secret which ^{not} may be mentioned or whispered to any one.
Our sources of information here are strictly limited and consist
only of some newspapers which, under existing rules and
ordinances, publish only censored news and are prohibited from
giving publicity to many kinds of news which are of vital
importance to us and to the Indian people. In these circumstances
it is obviously improper for us to give expression to any
views in relation to events with which we are so ill-acquainted
especially when the only method of ~~x~~ doing so open to us is to
address the Government of India.

rsday, November 2, 1944.

We have, therefore, avoided any such expression of views and have refrained from addressing you or any member of the Government of India even though at times the most fantastic charges have been made against us and the organization we have the honour to represent. These charges have now been made even more explicitly in an aggravated ~~form~~ form in the course of your recent letters to Mahatma Gandhi. The tone and contents of these letters, more especially of your letter of February 5, are such that it will perhaps serve as no useful purpose to address you on the subject. Yet we cannot ignore the fact that the head of the present Government of India has made these charges. I am venturing, therefore, to write to you .

CHARGE REFUTED

Your correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi raises a large number of issues many of which have great importance. Normally we would have our say in regard to them but at the present moment it is not my desire to discuss all these. I wish to confine myself more especially to one issue and to make it ~~clear~~ ^{clear} that so far as we are concerned both as individuals and in our corporate capacity, speaking on behalf of our organization, your charge that the Congress had organised a secret movement of violence is wholly false and without foundation.

There is a vital difference of opinion between you and us in regard to many matters and unfortunately this difference brings us into conflict. But even so as an English patriot and a lover of British freedom it should not be impossible for you to appreciate how Indian patriots and lovers of India's freedom might feel and it should be possible for some element of fair play and square dealing to be kept up in our ~~xxx~~ relation to each other.

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To make serious charges against those who are prevented from replying to them, to make those charges without producing evidence to support them by the vast propaganda machine of a powerful Government and at the same time to supply news and views which are contrary to them are not evidence either of fair play or a strong case.

In your letter of February 5th you refer to the Home Member's speech in the Central Legislative Assembly about charges made by him against the Congress. Further you say that all the mass of evidence that has since come to light has confirmed the conclusions then reached. This procedure of reaching conclusions and later to seek evidence to justify them is not usually considered judicial or proper.

A.I.C.C. NOT GUILTY

In this letter of Feb. 5th you further say you have
✓ ample information ^{that} ~~that~~ the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee. What your information is ^{we} ~~we~~ do not know. But ^{we} ~~do~~ know and can state with authority that the A.I.C.C. at no time contemplated such a campaign and
✓ never issued ^{such} instructions secret or other. The A.I.C.C.
D | was declared ^{an} ~~and~~ unlawful association ^{at} the time of our arrest and ^{practically} ~~practically~~ all prominent and responsible Congressmen including the members of the A.I.C.C. were arrested. At the same time the A.I.C.C. office and other Congress offices were seized by the police. Since then the A.I.C.C. cannot obviously function.

You mention that an underground Congress organisation exists now and that the wife of a member of the Congress Working Committee is a member of it. We know nothing of such an organization and are not in a position to find out but we are convinced that no Congress organization and no responsible ~~one~~

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Congressmen can be actually engaged in planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism. Congressmen, no doubt, consider it their duty to carry on civil resistance under certain circumstances to the best of their ability. But this has nothing in common with the charges you have made. It is possible that in the mind of the average official or policeman there is no particular difference between civil disobedience and bomb outrages etc., but we have no doubt in our mind, knowing our people as we do, that responsible Congressmen cannot possibly encourage in any way bomb outrages and ~~XXXX~~ terroristic acts.

NO SECRET ORGANISATION

A great deal is said about secret organisation, evidence of which the Government claims to possess but which it does not produce. May I draw your attention to the public speeches delivered by Mahatma Gandhi at the last meeting of the A.I.C.C. on August 8th, a few hours before his arrest, wherein ~~he~~ emphasised with all solemnity his appeal for non-violence. The Congress adopted this policy of non-violence 23 years ago and despite popular lapses occasionally has met with a great measure of success in regard to it. This will be evident from a comparison of the Indian national movement with national movements in other countries which have often openly based themselves upon violence. You have, no doubt, yourself approved of violence in many forms when you have considered that it was used for a right cause. The Congress, however, has adhered to its creed and practice of non-violence and has, for these 23 years, preached this method to the people.

If the Congress decides to change its policy and method and function in this matter like other national organisations it would do so openly and deliberately by changing its creed to that effect. There would be no secrecy, for apart from other

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valid reasons a conflict between public and secret advice stultifies an organisation which is based essentially on open action and constructive endeavour. The Congress may have many faults but it has not been accused of lack of courage in the pursuit of its objectives and ideals.

I would suggest to you to consider what the result in India might have been if the Congress ~~and~~ had deliberately instigated and encouraged violence and sabotages since the Congress is widespread and influential enough to have produced a situation a hundred times worse than anything that has so far happened.

CONGRESS BONA FIDE

In the summer of 1940 when France fell and England was facing dire peril Congress which had been previously thinking in terms of direct action deliberately avoided this in spite of strong demand for it. It did so entirely because it did not want to take advantage of a critical international situation or to encourage Nazi aggression in any way. Nothing would have been easier than for the Congress during those critical days to produce a situation of the utmost embarrassment to the Government.

GOVT. PROVOCATED IT

For many weeks prior to our arrest we had been pointing out in Working Committee meetings and resolutions and otherwise that public feeling in the country ~~and~~ had grown exceedingly bitter against the British Government in India. Not only we, but many moderate leaders stated publicly that they had never previously known such bitterness. Responsible Congressmen tried to divert this feeling into peaceful channels and largely succeeded in doing so. They would have succeeded even more if events had not taken place which suddenly exasperated the

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public and at the same time removed all prominent and well-known leaders who might have been able to control the situation. These events are better known to you than to us situated as we are but we have learnt enough to realize what the shock to the public must have been.

Wholesale arrests were followed immediately by the prohibition and prevention of all public ~~xxxxx~~ activity, all public expression of opinion, by lathi charges, tear gas, bombs and shooting. Well-known leaders were spirited away and their destinations were kept secret. Rumours of death and illness spread, and added to the public ^{excitement} ~~excitement~~ and resentment. This apparently was the background of the happenings during the second week of August last.

I do not wish to deal here with subsequent events for their adequate consideration requires fuller knowledge than we possess here but I would like you to consider what the effect on the Indian people must have been of all that has been done to them on behalf of the Government since our arrest and how large numbers of people must have been ^{driven} ~~driven~~ to desperation.

ANDHRA CIRCULAR STORY

Reference has been made in the Government communique accompanying the recent published correspondence to a certain circular ^{which} ~~which~~ is said to have been issued by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee. We know nothing of this and cannot believe that improper instructions against the fundamental principles of the Congress could have been issued by any responsible Congress authority. It is worthy of note, however, that even official references to this circular contradict themselves. The first mention of it was made in a press note issued by the Government of Madras on August 29. In this it was stated that the circular contained instructions inter alia

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for the removal of rails. Two weeks later Mr. Amery speaking in the House of Commons stated that the circular expressly said that rails should not be removed and that there should be no danger to life. This is an instructive and significant instance of how evidence is made up and used to influence people.

A.I.C.C. DECISION

In your letter of February 5th in referring to the A.I.C.C. resolution you draw attention to the concluding part in it which authorises Congressmen to act for themselves in the event of interference with the leadership of the movement.

SATYAGRAHA LAWS

This has appeared significant to you and you have drawn certain conclusions from it. You are evidently unaware that similar instructions were given when previous civil disobedience movements were started. Even during the individual civil disobedience movement of 1940-41 these instructions were repeated by me on many occasions. It is of the essence of civil disobedience or satyagraha that individuals should become self-sufficient units should need arise, as leaders are always likely to be removed and isolated at an early stage. In the present instance, the phase of civil disobedience was not reached.

A.I.C.C. ON WORLD SITUATION

It is curious that in a fairly lengthy correspondence and in various official statements nothing is said about the merits of the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. which dealt with the national and inter-national situation and made it clear that a free India would not only resist invasion to the utmost

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but would throw all her resources into the world struggle for freedom and align herself with the United Nations. This was made perfectly clear in the resolution itself. It was further emphasised by me speaking as president and by many other speakers.

It must be known to you that ever since the early beginnings of Fascist, Japanese and Nazi aggression in Africa, Asia and Europe, the Congress has consistently condemned them. No organisation in India or elsewhere has been so clear and emphatic on this subject. The Congress was anti-fascist and anti-Nazi when the British Government, under Mr. Chamberlain's leadership, was openly friendly to these regimes. The A.I.C.C. resolution of August last was especially based upon this anti-Axis policy and in particular on the urgent necessity of strengthening India's defence against invasion.

It was made clear and I emphasised it on that occasion that an acid test of the change was this Defence of India and the strengthening of the United Nations. It may also be known to you that several members of the present British Government have in the past repeatedly supported or welcomed Fascism and Japanese aggression.

You~~xxx~~ conclude your letter to Mahatma Gandhi by saying that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later. We shall welcome that day when we can face the peoples of the world and leave the verdict as to them. On that day others also including the British Government will have to meet and answer charges. I trust they will also welcome that day.

I apologize for the length of this letter. I felt that I owed it to you as well as to myself and any colleagues to be perfectly frank and to deny with all vehemence the false charges that have been repeatedly advanced against the Congress.

This letter has been written on Saturday afternoon February 13. I am told that like all other communications

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sent from here it will have to be despatched under registered cover to the Government of Bombay. As registration will not be possible on Sunday it will thus have to be sent on Monday and it may not reach you for some days. I ~~xxx~~ regret the delay.

— Yours sincerely, Sd./- Abul Kalam Azad.

— (A.P.)

Saturday, June 16, 1945.

'MAN-MADE' BENGAL FAMINE

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY
CONGRESS PRESIDENT INDICTS ALL AUTHORITIES CONCERNED

Banlura, June 15.

The moment he would be officially intimated of "the Wavell offer", he would call a meeting of the Congress Working Committee to consider the proposals, declared the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to-day. Till then he considered it better to remain silent over the matter. The Maulana added that he was also eager to meet the members of the Working Committee as such.

He referred to the last Bengal famine and held the then provincial, central and British Governments responsible for "this man-made famine".

He regretted that while thousands had been dying in the streets of Calcutta, the Secretary of State Mr. L.S. Amery was saying that there was no famine in Bengal. "We have had many wounds indeed in our national life. But this (Bengal famine) is such a one that it will take years to be cured".

Asked if he had been consulted by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai at Ahmednagar Fort camp on Desai-Liaquat Formula, he said that he had no knowledge of it whatsoever and added that Mr. Desai had gone there only in connection with private and legal consultation with Sardar Vallabhai Patel.

MR. ASAF ALI'S HEALTH

Expressing his deep sympathy and concern for the present state of health of Mr. Asaf Ali, member of the Congress Working Committee, the Maulana said that no civilized Government would have a man in such delicate health in detention. Only when Mr. Asaf Ali's health had completely broken down at Gurudaspur jail the Government of India released him, he added.

Sunday, June 16, 1945.

DEFEAT OF GERMANY

The Maulana also referred to the defeat of Germany and observed that Nazism was a hindrance to world progress. Germany had blundered by attacking Soviet Russia, he continued, and remarked U.S.S.R. had now shown a new way as also the strength of the Soviet system.

He then narrated his prison life and said that his health was alright. He was 147 pounds when he left the Ahmednagar Fort camp and now he had gained a pound or two at Bunkura. He praised the local officials for the comfortable arrangements they had made for him. "It is not painful for me to live alone, rather I then live better", he remarked adding in loud laughter that he wondered why putting in cell in a jail should be regarded as punishment.

In prison he used to rise at 3 a.m. and after bat' and tea absorbed himself in studies.

— (A.P.)

sday, June 19, 1945.

WAVELL INVITES CONGRESS PRESIDENT

INVITATION RECEIVED
MAULANA AZAD EXPLAINS POSITION
CONGRESS A NATIONAL BODY
WORKING COMMITTEE TO DECIDE THE PROPOSALS ONLY ON THAT BASIS

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has received an invitation from Lord Wavell to attend the Leaders' Conference at Simla on June 25.

The Congress President said that he would prefer not to express any opinion on the Wavell proposals till the Working Committee had thoroughly considered them. The proposals had not only communal but also political aspect and he considered the latter to be more important.

"I must, however, make it quite clear", he said, "that the Congress will, under no circumstances, accept its being termed a Hindu organisation or a sectarian or communal body. The Congress has been a national organisation since its very birth and the Working Committee's decision on the Wavell proposals will be arrived at only on a national basis".

nday, June 25, 1945.

SIMLA CONFERENCE MEETS THIS MORNING

VICEROY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

'CONGRESS APPROACH TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE' : AZAD EXPLAINS VIEW-POINTS

Simla, June 24.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, left for the Viceroy's House at 11-30 a.m. for his interview with Lord Wavell. The Maulana's interview with the Viceroy lasted about an hour and a half.

When the Congress President came out from the viceregal lodge after his interview with the Viceroy, he told ^{the} correspondents that he had explained to the Viceroy the Congress Working Committee's views. The discussions he said took place in a very friendly atmosphere and the Viceroy had given him patient hearing.

Asked whether he had presented any counter-proposals to the Viceroy, the Maulana said he was not prepared to disclose at this stage what had taken place at the informal conference. He emphasised that he had explained the Congress position in ~~unequivocal~~ unequivocal terms.

Asked by the press correspondents if he was releasing the correspondence ^{ce} between him and the Viceroy while he was in the Ahmednagar detention camp, ^{Abul Kalam} Maulana ^{The Congress President,} Azad, said, "I had ~~said~~ said at Calcutta that I would release the correspondence to the press but now I feel that we should look forward rather than backward, and therefore it is not necessary to publish it".

CONGRESS POLICY

"The Congress wants to be constructive in its approach to the conference called by Lord Wavell and whatever suggestions we make, either in our personal discussions with the Viceroy or at the conference to-morrow will be prompted by this consideration", said the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, to the political correspondent of the Associated Press of India, soon after his return ~~and~~ from the Viceregal Lodge. - (A.P.)

Friday, June 29, 1945.

LEADERS BUSY IN INFORMAL CONFERENCE

SIMLA DISCUSSIONS
DEADLOCK OVER ALLOTMENT OF QUOTA OF SEATS
'CONGRESS ATTITUDE CONSTRUCTIVE': MAULANA AZAD CLARIFIES
POSITION

Simla, June 28.

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement :-

"It appears that there is, in some circles, misunderstanding of the Congress position which requires to be clarified.

"I placed the invitation to the Simla Conference before the Congress Working Committee on June 21st. After careful consideration the Working Committee decided that I should meet the H.E. The Viceroy before the conference and should myself participate in it and instruct other Congress invitees to attend, if, as a result of the preliminary meeting I felt it proper to do so. I had the pleasure of meeting H.E. the Viceroy on the forenoon of June 24, and after obtaining clarification on some of the preliminary points I attended the conference and am participating in ^{its} ~~the~~ deliberations.

"I am not attending the conference in my personal capacity but on behalf of the Congress Working Committee. It has delegated to me full powers and authorised me to adopt such ~~an~~ attitude as I may consider necessary in respect of the various problems that may arise. It is, therefore, my concern to watch carefully the changes in the details and application of the new offer and take decisions accordingly.

"When all the details of the picture have been filled in I shall meet my colleagues of the Working Committee and place it before them for final decision. The question of calling the Congress Working Committee does not yet arise since that stage has not been reached.

iday, June 29, 1945.

"If the Congress Working Committee has to be called immediately, I think, it will ^{be} more convinient to call it here.. I ^{have} ~~had~~ already requested all members to keep ready to start for an emerrent meeting on notice. I think that an interval of four days will be enough to permit the Committee to meet here in Simla.

"I am not at this stage in a position to say what the final decision of the Working Committee will be but I would like to make it clear once again so that there may be no room for doubt on the point , that the attitude of the Congress is constructive and not destructive."

day, June 29, 1945.

CONGRESS NOT A COMMUNAL BODY

MAULANA AZAD EXPLAINS POSITION

IT CAN NEVER AGREE TO SELECT ONLY HINDU REPRESENTATIVES

Simla, June 28.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Indian National Congress, said in an interview yesterday that it was at least as important to get broadminded men on the proposed interim government as it was to be sure that each community was represented.

"The Congress cannot accept any suggestion that it is a communal body," he said, "and can therefore, never agree to select only the Hindu representatives. It must have a voice in the selection of Indians of all communities, for to do otherwise would be to contradict the whole character of the Congress."

At the same time the President outlined the general background against which the discussions are being carried on.

During the interview the Congress President sat in a thoughtful mood drawing on Turkish blend cigarettes. He wore a comfortable homespun grey dressing gown over his pyjamas. Outside, the thick Simla fog cut the cottage off from the rest of the world. The air was chill and bracing in sharp contrast to the heat of the blazing hot plains where dwell nearly all of the 400 million people whose governmental future is being decided at the Conference.

President Maulana Azad, understands English but for the major part he gave the answers in Urdu, which was interpreted by Mr. Mumayun Kabir, who is acting as his Secretary.

As to the meeting between Pandit G. R. Pant and Mr. M.A. Jinnah, Maulana Azad said that it was part of a network of discussions which necessarily, will be carried on outside the formal conference and there probably will be further informal conferences between the Congress and League representatives.

1. June 29, 1945.

Rumours in Conference quarters that Pandit Pant and Mr. M.A. Jinnah had carried the talk forward even to the point of bringing up names of the future members were declared by the Congress President as untrue. He said that Mr. Jinnah at the conclusion of the talk with the Viceroy had asked Pandit Pant to come and see him.

"Each question must be considered ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ relationship to the others," said Maulana Azad. "No final decision can be reached on any one point until all the major questions are settled."

He made gestures by the hand to indicate that the whole pattern had to be worked out together.

He gave this description of conference affairs :

There were questions of apportionment of membership among the various groups and of whom those members would be composed. There was the question of restoration of representative government in the ~~new~~ provinces and how the various parties would react there. There was the question of ^{minority} ~~minority~~ groups whose representation on the Council had to be settled.

His comment emphasised again the vast difficulty of conducting negotiations on such a basis. It is impossible for representatives to agree on one point and dispose of it before going on to the next. No one thing can be disposed of finally, but it must remain in a fluid state while the other issues are discussed and brought near agreement.

In a sense it is like solving a jigsaw puzzle where none of the parts will stay in its place, but where each part is likely to move under the influence of another part and even change its shape.

But despite all this the Congress President seemed confident of success in reaching an agreement.

One thing on which he insisted was that the Muslim League must yield in its traditional insistence that it is the one and only representative organisation of the Muslims in India.

Friday, June 29, 1945.

"To accept that position would make the Congress a sectarian body". Maulana Azad/ said.

The President said that a meeting of the Working Committee would be called before any agreement was reached on who would sit on the National Council, and that he expected the negotiations would reach that stage soon.

"The whole thing has been done with speed", he said smilingly, "and we are approaching an agreement rapidly."

While therefore it will remain for the Viceroy technically to name the members of his council, President Maulana Azad said that it was to be expected that the list agreed on by the representatives at the conference would be accepted by Lord Wavell. He suggested that after some degree of agreement had been reached on the question of apportionment of members, the names would begin to creep into the discussions. Their broadly national character would become an important factor.

Asked what it is that had induced the seeming ⁿchange of attitude on the part of the Muslim League, Maulana Azad smilingly commented that it was something for political correspondents to deduce. However, he briefly suggested that some of the political difficulties which the League had encountered in the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, N.W.F.P., Bengal and Sind might be the reason.

Finally, he said that when agreement on all phases was accepted by the conferees and by the Working Committee the whole plan would be submitted to the general assembly of the All-India Congress Committee. — (A.P. of America.)

May, July 1, 1945.

AZAD EXPLAINS CONGRESS STAND
A NATIONAL APPROACH

—
READINESS TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE RATHER THAN DESTRUCTIVE

—
VICEROY TO DECIDE FINALLY

—
CLAIM OF RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL
PRISONERS WAIVED AT GREAT RISK

—
Simla, June 30.

In an answer to a question about the the extent to which the Congress would be^{prepared} to contribute to the success of the proposals, the Congress President said that the very fact that it had agreed to participate in the Conference clearly indicated the Congress ^arediness to ^{be}~~the~~ Constructive in its attitude rather than destructive. The Congress could very well have demanded the release of all political prisoners still under detention in order to create a favourable atmosphere and also the removal of the ban/ on the All-India Congress Committee and other Allied organisations before agreeing to participate in the Simla Conference. The Maulana Sahib emphasised that none could have blamed the Congress had it insisted on the fulfilment of those conditions as a prerequisite for Congress participation.

GREAT RISK UNDERTAKEN

This the Congre did not do and that the Congress waived the claim at the risk of being misunderstood by its own followers proved its readiness to contribute its share to the success of the constructive move that had been made by Lord Wavell. Maulana Azad said, "All reasonable men should agree that the Congress could not have gone farther than this."

Explaining the Congress approach to the Wavell Plan ~~xxxx~~ the Congress President emphasised that it was not a party approach. "The Congress will always have before it the national point of view and any step which the Congress takes

nday, July 1, 1945.

will be in accordance with its traditions and policy pursued all along. For instance, when the Congress prepared the panel it will see to it that it nominates Hindus, Muslims, Harijans and other communities."

The Congress President further elucidated that selection of the personnel for the panel would not be confined to Congress men alone. "Our object is to have the best men in the country irrespective of the fact whether ~~they are~~ they are Congressmen or not."

In reply to a suggestion made in certain quarters that the Congress was big enough to afford to yield to the Muslim League without suffering in stature or prestige, the Maulana Sahab said, "I do ~~not~~ not share that view. I feel that if the Congress fails to show sufficient strength and determination at a critical juncture like the present to adhere steadfastly to its national outlook and the principles for which it has always stood, the future of the Congress organisation will be jeopardised." (A. P.)

Wednesday, July 4, 1945.

WHEN MAY NEW PLAN BE ACCEPTED

AZAD EXPLAINS

MESSAGES TO INDIAN PEOPLE AND MUSLIMS

Simla, July 3.

In course of an exclusive interview with Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, special representative of the "Bombay Chronicle" Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, issued the following two messages (one to the people of India and the other to the Indian Muslims):-

To the Indian people - "This is a critical moment in our political life and, therefore, it is essential that we should keep before us the real significance of the temporary situation that has arisen in the country. We should neither attach exaggerated and undue importance to the Wavell offer, nor should we ignore the real demands and exigencies of the situation. Consistent with the defence of our principles, if the way is opened to a temporary solution leading to our ultimate goal of freedom, then we should unhesitatingly avail ourselves of it. If such a way is not opened, then we should watch our step and not budge an inch from our position."

To the Indian Muslims - "Muslims of India should not think for a moment that the Muslims in the Congress are blind to the genuine doubts and grievances of the Muslims. Indeed perhaps they realize this situation better than anyone else. The point, however, is what should be the correct approach to remove these doubts and grievances ?

"Differences between nationalist Muslims and the Muslim League are not of the ultimate aim which after all is the well-being and honourable existence of Indian Muslims in a free India, but of methods, to be used to achieve the desired end."

Wednesday, July 4, 1945.

And if we so desire, we can **easily** remove even this difference over our respective methods. What is needed, is a broad vision, large heartedness and sincerity of purpose. - (U.P.)

Today, July 6, 1945.

LIST TO BE SUBMITTED TODAY
CONGRESS NOMINEES

MAULANA AZAD OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUTCOME OF TALKS

'ROAD CONTINUES TO BE CLEAR'

NEHRU'S INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY
PROVIDED HELPFUL BACKGROUND FOR TALKS

Simla, July 5.

.....

AZAD OPTIMISTIC

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, seemed to be optimistic about the final outcome of the Simla deliberations to-day. At the end of this morning's session of the Working Committee the Congress President ^{told} ~~to~~ the Associated Press special correspondent that the Committee hoped to approve finally the list of names to be submitted to the Viceroy at this afternoon's meeting of the Committee. He also said he has invited such Congress invitees to the conference as are not members of the Working Committee to attend the committee meeting at 4 P.M. to-day for the purpose of consultations.

Asked how the situation was, the Congress President said : "It is quite good. The road continues to be clear and there has been no obstacle so far."

To a further question Maulana Azad said that Pandit Nehru's interview with Viceroy on Monday last was very satisfactory and provided a helpful background for the Working Committee deliberations.

Asked what would be the attitude of the Congress if the Muslim League eventually stayed out, the Congress President said : "It is for Lord Wavell then to decide what ^{he} ~~be~~ should do.

I can only speak on behalf of the Congress and so far as the Congress is concerned we have made it quite clear that we are prepared to play our part." — (A.P.)

saturday, July 7, 1945.

CONGRESS SUGGESTS 15 NAMES
VICEROY'S COUNCIL

LIST TO BE FORWARDED TO LORD WAVELL TO-DAY

SELECTION OF MEN OF ABILITY

MOULANA AZAD DEFINES PRINCIPLES
THAT GUIDED WORKING COMMITTEE

Simla, July 6.

.....

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, at a brief Press Conference defined the principles ~~which~~ which guided the ~~Congress~~ Working Committee in framing the Congress panel.

The first consideration before the Committee, he said, was to select men of ability.

Secondly, the Committee was guided by a desire not to confine the selection to party limits. Able persons outside the Congress have also been included in the list.

The third principle which guided the Committee in making the selection was to include representatives of as many minorities as possible in the list.

The Committee has recommended fifteen names excluding the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy.

The Congress Working Committee met this morning at Armsdale. All the members of the Committee, including Mr. Asaf Ali, who did not attend yesterday's meeting owing to ill health, attended.

The Committee met again at 3 P.M. at Manor Ville, Mahatma Gandhi's residence, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad ~~xxxxxxx~~ presided.

Maulana Azad told pressmen after the morning sitting that the Committee further discussed the list of names to be submitted to the Viceroy by the Congress. Final touches would be given this afternoon. He appealed to pressmen to desist from

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from speculating on the names for the proposed Executive Council. The Maulana could not say whether the Working Committee session would continue after it had taken the final decision on the panel of ~~the~~ names. It was possible that a further meeting might be held to discuss the international situation, the internal organisation of the Congress and other matters.

"We have reached the final stage and will submit the panel of names to the Viceroy in course of the day," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, to the 'United Press' representative after the Working Committee meeting this morning.

When asked whether he is likely to see the Viceroy Maulana Azad said, "Well it is a matter of procedure. I may myself take the list to the Viceroy or send somebody else. We have not decided about that."

(A.P. 2 (U.P.))

Monday, July 9, 1945.

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETS

FOUR HOURS' DISCUSSION

Matters Re: International Situation
Considered

MOULANA AZAD'S STATEMENT

Members To Stay on : Bengal Famine & Ashti
Chimur Cases to Receive Attention

SIMLA, July, 8.

The Congress Working Committee met at 2 p.m. at Manor Vile^l,
Mahatma Gandhi's residence. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presided.

The Congress Working Committee considered to-day for four
hours the internal organisation of the Congress as well as various
matters concerning the international situation with special reference
to the San Francisco Conference.

The Committee meets again at 2 p.m. to-morrow at Maulana Abul
Kalam Azad's residence.

Maulana Azad, the Congress President, told a representative
of the United Press that Bengal Famine, the general situation in
the country and the cases of Ashti and Chimur prisoners and such
other important topics would be discussed at the meetings of the
Congress Working Committee.

He further said, " The next immediate task before the new
Executive Council would be to see to the needs of the general
masses in the country, namely, to make available food and
clothing." ... (A. P. and U.P.)

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Sunday, July 15, 1945.

CAUSE OF SIMLA TALKS FAILURE

LEAGUE'S ATTITUDE

Moulana Azad Reviews Congress
Policy.

SIMLA, July 14.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, at a Press conference this evening reviewed the policy taken by the Congress during the Simla Conference. He said that the Congress was prepared to accommodate the Muslim League consistently with its national policy. This would be made clear when the panel submitted by the Congress was officially released. Failure of the Conference, he added, was due to the uncompromising attitude taken by the League.

Continuing Maulana Azad said that the British Government must share the responsibility for the communal situation in the country to-day. Settlement would be possible either now or in future only on a reasonable and fair term, he added.

Maulana Sahib added that he was in correspondence with Lord Wavell about the publication of the correspondence passed between the Congress and Lord Wavell in connection with the Simla Conference.

"Two points arise out of the present position; the first is that the attitude of the Muslim League is responsible for the failure of the conference and the second point, which emerges from the situation is that after the refusal of the Muslim League the question naturally came before the Viceroy whether a forward step should be taken or not. The Viceroy decided not to take for the present", observed Maulana Azad.

Maulana Azad said that he had made it clear to the Viceroy that the Congress was prepared to go forward and if a certain group wished to keep out it might be left out."

Sunday, July, 15, 1945.

With a ^{faltering}~~flattering~~ step and wavering mind we cannot cover our destination", remarked Maulana Azad.

"It is good to think twice before taking a step forward. But when step has already been ^{taken}~~taking~~ hesitation is not virtue but weakness. If the British Government wished to give shape to things they should have realised the communal condition. They should have been prepared not to surrender the right of veto to any group and thus block the ~~path~~ of progress", Maulana Azad said.

TALKS WITH WAVELL ON JUNE 24

Maulana Azad at the outset explained the talks he had with the Viceroy on June 24 when he placed the Congress point of view ^{before}~~before him~~ ^{him}. He said that he emphasised that (1) the present arrangement was purely temporary and interim, (2) it was a preliminary step to the goal of independence, and (3) the Working Committee wished to co-operate in every reasonable way but their decision required ratification by the All India Congress Committee.

Maulana Azad threw further light on other points that (1) every effort should be made to give national character to the Indian army and to bring about ^{cordiality}~~cordially~~ between National army and the National Government and the people (2) the India Government could not support any policy aimed at continuation of imperialist control of any of the countries in South East Asia nor could it allow use of its resources in man and money. - (U. P.)

Tuesday, July 17, 1945.

RELEASE OF CONGRESSMEN

Azad in Correspondence With Viceroy.

SIMLA, July 15.

While ^{sipping}~~drinking~~ fruit-juice which is his only food during lunch time, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, said in an exclusive interview to United Press, " I have been in correspondence with the Viceroy on the question of the release of Congressmen , still behind prison bars and I am anxiously awaiting the results. I have urged upon His Excellency that to create an atmosphere of goodwill and mutual trust, it is essential that all congressmen prisoners and particularly members of the All-India Congress Committee should be released and the ban on the organisation withdrawn".

Maulana Azad said he could not indicate what would be the results of the effort but to his mind Lord Wavell appeared to be favourably inclined.

Maulana Azad further said that Lord Wavell both at the time of the interview and also in correspondence with the Congress President appealed to him to see that the Congress always maintained the same co-operative and helpful attitude.

Referring to the failure of the Leaders' Conference, Maulana Azad said, " It has been a great mistake to convene the conference on a communal background. The British Government ^{has}~~had~~ got to accept some responsibility for the communal situation in the country as it is now. If the British Government is sincere to solve the political deadlock, there is no other way out but to take a firm attitude and if any party or group wants to block the way, they should not yield. The present attitude of the British Government has made the situation more complex and difficult of solution. The Muslim League found the British Government was not strong and had a wavering mind and hence the League felt it was stronger and took the attitude as it did.

Tuesday, July 17, 1945.

"The Congress", said Maulana Azad, "has given ^{an} ~~as~~ assurance ^{and we} to the Viceroy [^] have decided that our attitude will be so helpful as it is now."

Replying to the question whether the Congress could take any concrete step now, Maulana Azad said, "I ~~do~~ do not see any way immediately. But the Working Committee will to-day discuss the situation. The Congress will, however, watch the development and give a lead, whenever it is found necessary." Mr. Azad further told the United Press representative, "The National Planning Committee did very useful work but before the final report could be submitted, the leaders were arrested. The Congress, will, however, like to revive the activities of the Committee ". *

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Thursday, July 19, 1945.

POLITICALS TO BE RELEASED SOON ?

Azad's Correspondence with Viceroy : Simla
Did Some Ground-Work For Future

"The Simla Conference has contributed something towards India's goal of independence," said Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, to a staff reporter of this paper on his arrival at Calcutta from Simla on Wednesday afternoon.

He explained - as a result of the Simla Conference the political atmosphere in India has been cleared for a better understanding between India and the British Government. Some ground work, he added, has also been done for future.

Moulana Azad who sat for this interview immediately on his arrival at his residence at Circular Road was ^{tired} ~~tried~~ and sweating and preferred to reserve a detailed analysis of the "achievements" at Simla to a later date."

CORRESPONDENCE CONFIDENTIAL

Moulana Azad said Lord Wavell has informed him that all the proceedings of the Conference as also the correspondence which passed between Lord Wavell and the Congress President were to be regarded for the time being confidential. This reply was given by Lord Wavell to an inquiry by the Congress president if his correspondence could be released to the Press.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Congress President said that on the question whether the Congress should now accept office in provinces including Bengal where section 93 is in force, he feels ~~xx~~ it will be very difficult to accept office until a popular Government is established at the Centre. This, the Congress President made it clear, is his personal opinion.

DOOR OPEN FOR LEAGUE

Asked whether he feels whether any fresh effort should be made for a settlement with the Muslim League, Moulana Azad said : "The door of the Congress is always open for the

Thursday, July 19, 1945

Muslim League. The Congress has always been anxious to come to a settlement with the Muslim League. But in view of the present attitude of the Muslim League I do not see how an agreement could be reached."

Inquired if he would take up Bengal affairs now, Moulana Azad said he intended to take rest for sometime. Bengal affairs, he said, need a long and careful attention, and after his return from Kashmir where he intends to take a few days' rest he proposes to take them up.

POLITICALS' RELEASE

Moulana Azad said he has written to Lord Wavell on the question of release of all political prisoners and the lifting of ban on the Congress. Although he has not yet received any reply Moulana Azad expects the political prisoners will be released very soon and the ban on the Congress will also be withdrawn in the near future. It is very difficult for him to say but he expects he will be able to hold a meeting of the A.I.C.C. in course of the next four or five weeks. A meeting of the Congress Working Committee will also be held then.

He has received requests to hold the A.I.C.C. meeting at Bombay, Delhi and other places. The staff reporter of this paper suggested the next meeting of the A.I.C.C should be held in Calcutta in view of Bengal's situation. Moulana Azad said it may be held but nothing has yet been decided about it.

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Wednesday, July 25, 1945.

OBSERVANCE OF NINTH OF AUGUST

Maulana Azad's Appeal to Congressmen
To Celebrate A National Week
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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has issued an appeal to Congressmen all over the land to observe the ninth of August in a proper and befitting manner and to devote the whole of the week following to the constructive programme.

He says :

The week following the ninth of August has been declared as a national week in various provinces. I would, in this connection, issue the following directions to Congressmen all over India. We must permit no word or action that may mar the solemnity of the day. Noisy demonstrations and cheap rhetoric are an insult to the memory of those who have fallen. Our only fitting homage is to work for the cause for which they died. Lack of organisation and discipline has been one of the fatal weaknesses in our national struggle. We must pledge ourselves to overcome such weakness. In the changed circumstances of to-day the constructive programme offers the only means of welding ourselves into disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. Through the constructive programme we must, therefore, rehabilitate our people and garner our strength.

I would appeal to Congressmen all over the land to observe the ninth August in a proper and befitting manner. There must be no exuberance in work^d ^{or} ~~of~~ action but a dignified and well-ordered display of our national will to freedom. Where there is no ban on public meetings, they should be held at 6 p.m. to renew our pledge to the country. Where such ban exists, meetings should be held in private quarters at the same hour. There should be no speeches except by the President of the meeting.

Wednesday, July 25, 1945.

He should briefly explain the nature of our peaceful and non-violent struggle and emphasise the importance of the constructive programme. The audience should then stand in silence for two minutes in memory of those who have been taken away from our midst in the last three years.

The meeting should then disperse in orderly and dignified silence. The whole week should be observed as one devoted to the constructive programme.

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Wednesday, July 25, 1945.

RABINDRANATH MEMORIAL

Maulana Azad Lends All Support To
Appeal For Funds.

In a statement issued to-day the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad lends all his support to the appeal for funds issued by the Rabindranath Memorial Committee.

He says: The fourth anniversary of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's death falls on the 7th of August this year. His was a life dedicated to India and the world. His poems and songs will be remembered and sung so long as beauty is sought and cherished by man. His countrymen will remember with gratitude his efforts for their social, educational and moral uplift. The poet of Indian freedom, his flaming words have instilled courage into ^odropping hearts and steeled waverers to new and heroic efforts. A giant among men, centuries will pass before the world sees his like again.

It is a matter for shame that we have not raised as yet a fitting memorial for him. Perhaps he needs no memorial other than the songs we cherish in our hearts. It is, however, our duty to see that the objects for which he laboured even to the end of his days are maintained as he would have liked to maintain them. The Viswa Bharati is the living symbol of his hopes and dreams. We must ensure that it continues to serve the ends for which he founded it.

I, therefore, lend all my support to the appeal for funds issued by the Rabindranath Memorial Committee in this behalf. I understand that the Committee has set a target of ten lakhs from Bengal before the 7th of August this year. I have no doubt that Bengal will rise to the occasion and leave the target behind. For, in seeking to honour her national poet, Bengal will do honour to herself, and I am confident that the rest of India will not lag behind.

Saturday, 28th July, 1945.

MOMENTOUS FOR WORLDS' FUTURE

AZAD ON BRITISH ELECTIONS

Issues More Important Than Personalities:
Indian Opinion Favourable

The President of the Indian National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, told the "Associated Press of India" in an interview yesterday that "the victory of the British Labour Party in the general election imposes heavy responsibilities on the party. The world is waiting to see if they can avoid the mistakes committed at the end of the ^{last} ~~last~~ Great War, India will also watch and wait".

Maulana Azad added: "The British elections just over are momentous for the future of the world. The British people have spoken and their decision is unequivocal and clear. More important than the men for whom they voted are the issues which decided their choice. There is not much difference between the British parties regarding the principles for which the war is being fought. The chief difference is in their outlook on the future world. The results are a signal victory of new ideas over old and prove that the people of Great Britain have decided to discard the old and worn-out order."

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has congratulated the British premier-elect, Mr. Clement Attlee on the election results.

In the cable to Mr. Attlee, the Congress President says :
"Hearty congratulations to the people of Great Britain on behalf of Indian people on the results of the elections, which demonstrate their abandonment of old ideas and acceptance of a new world".

Saturday, 28th July, 1945.

In a cable to Sir Stafford Cripps, Maulana Azad says :
" Congratulations from one who, despite differences in respect
of the solution of Indian problem, has always been convinced
of your sincerity of purpose and grateful for your endeavours
on behalf of India". - (A.P.)

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Tuesday, August 14, 1945.

AZAD-WAVELL CORRESPONDENCE

Publication To Reveal Nothing Suspicious :
Congress President's Assurance.

GULMARG, Aug. 13.

An assurance to the public that the correspondence between Lord Wavell and himself relating to the Simla Conference whenever released for publication will reveal nothing that will not satisfy everyone of the goodwill of the Congress towards all parties and of its firm determination to accommodate them all for fruitful co-operation was given by the President of the Indian National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in an interview to the Associated Press of India.

Maulana Azad said : " In a recent statement to the press regarding the correspondence between Lord Wavell as Chairman of the Simla Conference and myself, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah desires me to overlook the ruling of the chair and publish it.

I need hardly emphasise the fact that I have sought the permission of the Chairman of the Conference for the publication of our correspondence, but it would hardly be consistent with the conduct of public affairs if I did not agree to abide by the ruling of the chair.

I can, however, assure the public that the correspondence between Lord Wavell and myself relating to the Conference whenever released for publication, will reveal nothing that will not satisfy everyone of the goodwill of the Congress towards all parties and of its firm determination to accommodate them all for fruitful co-operation.

I can assure Mr. Jinnah or the rest of the country that there is nothing in that correspondence which would support many of the suspicions to which expression is being given.

Tuesday, August 14, 1945.

Consistently with the proprieties of public affairs, I would be prepared to share the said correspondence with Mr. Jinnah in confidence should he desire it and thus while respecting the ruling of the chairman of the Conference, satisfy the President of the Muslim League personally that the purpose for which he would like to see it published is irrelevant to the issue. The other questions based on the hypothetical contents of this correspondence do not arise". - (A.P.).

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Thursday, August, 16, 1945.

NO PEACE WITHOUT FREE INDIA

Underlying Causes of War Must Be
Removed, Says Azad.

GULMARG, Aug. 15.

"Until the underlying causes of war which pivot on the greed of the powerful and the humiliation and exploitation of the weak and the vanquished are effectively removed this victory may be no more than the false dawn of fugitive peace."

Thus observed the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, when interviewed by the Associated Press of India on the end of the Japanese war.

"The world cannot forget" Maulana Azad said, "that India has yet to reap the fruits of a truly democratic victory and her struggle for freedom. One fifth of the human race has yet to occupy its rightful place as a free people. No peace can last long if India is not allowed to function as a free country equal in status to the other great countries of the world."

The Congress President said: "After eight years and more in China and after five years the whole world has come out of a most horrible flood of fire and blood and the shore of peace is now discernible. The world has witnessed during this period the rise and fall of three devastating floods namely Fascism, Nazism and Japanese militarism, which threatened to overwhelm the entire world but which have in the end been overwhelmed by gathering forces of democracy. This is the one aspect of the end of this war which has in it elements of hope for those who value individual and national freedom as man's birthright and which makes it possible for the freedom loving humanity to welcome it."

The end of armed hostilities is bound to bring to the suffering mankind a sense of profound relief.

Thursday, August, 15, 1945.

" I must recall even at the risk of repudiation that National India was the first to raise its voice against the rising tide of Fascism, Nazism and Japanese aggression at a time when some of principal allies were following policies calculated to encourage them. It is , therefore, National India's legitimate right to-day to be the first in the field to welcome suppression of reactionary and aggressive forces and to congratulate democratic forces of humanity on their victory over evil powers of reaction and aggression. While, bearing in mind all those whose sufferings have made it possible for the world to breathe in peace again, I offer, on behalf of India, my hearty congratulations to the people of China whose heroic and determined struggle and colossal suffering have now been crowded with success."

" For four years and longer they struggled, unaided by the Great Powers, against overwhelming forces and but for their heroic stand during the years of unequal struggle the world might have had to face an enemy far more powerful than the one now vanquished.

While the peace-loving people of the world over may legitimately celebrate the end of this war we must not forget that real peace is still a desideratum. One may ask whether the victorious Powers after vanquishing the foes, whose greed has been the cause of untold calamities and years of agony, are now in a mood to usher in an era of real peace. If Potsdam is an indication of their present mood, a repetition of Versailles and its consequences cannot be ruled out again. The defeat of Japan brings the fate of the South Asiatic countries to the fore. If they are to relapse into their own bondage this victory will mean nothing to them but a change of masters. - (A.P.)

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Tuesday, August 21, 1945.

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE ISSUE

AZAD URGES SETTLEMENT

War Can No Longer Be Excuse For
Postponement

GOOD-WILL GESTURE TO LEAGUE

Congress Position To Be Clarified At Next
Meeting Of Working Committee.
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SRINAGAR, Aug. 20.

Following is the full text of Congress President's statement:

" The war which has just ended led to the postponement of many urgent problems. In some cases this was inevitable. In many others the war was made an excuse for such postponement. The final end of the war has suddenly brought all these problems to the forefront and war conditions can no longer be pleaded as an excuse. Both from the national and international points of view the question of India's freedom, political and economic, is now urgent and vital issue on which depend not only the well-being of four hundred millions but also to a large extent the future peace of the world.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

" This question, always vital and important, has now been precipitated to the very forefront and there can be no further delay in its solution. The solution has now to be a final and permanent one. Such a settlement can only mean the establishment of a democratic government for a free and independent India co-operating in the international domain with the other free governments of the world. As a part of this settlement, and for the brief period between now and the assumption of office by the government of free India under a constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly, interim governments both in the centre and the provinces will be necessary in order to deal with the acute distress prevailing in the country and with post-war problems, as well as to arrange the preliminary processes of the Constituent Assembly. But such interim

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arrangements can only be possible as a ^{part}~~part~~ of the final settlement.

"It has been stated on behalf of the British Government that a Constituent Assembly should be summoned at the conclusion of hostilities. Hostilities have now ceased. The only excuse that may be advanced for a possible delay in convening the Constituent Assembly is the lack of a solution of the communal problem. This should offer no difficulty as the Indian National Congress has gone a long way to find a solution

CONGRESS VIS-A-VIS LEAGUE

" In regard to the Hindu-Muslim problem, as it has taken shape to-day with the demand on the part of the Muslim League for a partition of the country, the Congress has given the most earnest consideration to it, desiring as it does, the well-being and freedom of the country as a whole and of each group or community in it. It has even recognised the right of self-determination of any area provided that this is the established and declared will of the inhabitants of that area, but subject to the exercise of such right not resulting in the compulsion of any other group.

" The Congress is convinced that the free Indian State can only be based on the willing co-operation of its federating units and of its principal communities and cannot be founded on compulsion. Further, the Congress has declared that the federating units should have the largest conceivable amount of freedom to function as they will, subject only to certain essential bonds for their common welfare. Even independent countries adjoining each other have to develop these common bonds and links and can no longer live in isolation.

" Thus the Congress has gone to the farthest limit of recognising the right of self-determination even to the extent of separation under certain circumstances and with

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certain safeguards for the communities affected and for the country as a whole.

"It has done so in the earnest hope that when the problems are viewed in proper perspective and without passion and prejudice, the facts of the situation will induce all concerned to co-operate together in building up a free and democratic Indian State, with every freedom to the constituent units to develop according to their needs and wishes. But if any such unit or group of adjoining unit decided otherwise, it can take charge of its own destiny. It will be open to the representatives of such a unit in the Constituent Assembly to advance its claims and a decision on this should not rest on the majority vote of the assembly but on the vote of the representatives of the assembly of the areas concerned.

"While the Congress position is clear., doubts and suspicions have not wholly disappeared and I feel that in order to remove these some clarification is needed. I propose therefore to place this matter before the next meeting of the Working Committee and I am confident that the desired clarification will be forthcoming.

REALISM DEMANDED

" So far as I am concerned, after long and careful deliberation I have come to the conclusion that the division of India is wholly impracticable and opposed to the ultimate interests of Indian Muslims themselves.

" But I realize also that the present political atmosphere of the country is surcharged with suspicion and doubt and a large section among Indian Muslims does not seem to be in a mood to view realities in their ~~in~~ proper perspective. This section can be expected to do so only when it is assured that the determination of their destinies rests with Muslims themselves without external compulsion. When this is realised, suspicion and doubt will largely disappear and efforts to reach a

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desirable and mutually satisfactory solution of the communal problem will be fruitful.

"In the great tasks before us, all of us must get rid of the fear complex. I appeal to my fellow Muslims to view the question in this perspective realising that their future lies in their own hands and there can be no compulsion on them. I appeal also to my Hindu and Sikh and other fellow citizens to appreciate this approach to a problem which has troubled us so much and has been a bar to our progress. With this approach on the part of Muslims and Hindus and Sikhs, I have no doubt that the atmosphere of distrust will undergo a change and give place to a climate of mutual trust. Even the section of Muslims I have in view can then be trusted to begin to examine the question of separation dispassionately.

"It should be borne in mind that if the right of self-determination is conceded to any area in such circumstances as prevail in our country, it is not to encourage fissiparous tendencies, but to remove the very cause of distrust, and therefore the desire for separation."

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Friday, August 24, 1945.

AZAD'S EMPHATIC PROTEST

Holding of General Elections Now
Unjust

WARTIME HANDICAPS NOT YET OVER

Wire To Viceroy To Allow Congress
Sufficient Time for Organisation

SRINAGAR, Aug. 21.

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has sent a telegram to the Viceroy pointing out that it would be unjust to hold general ^elections without first allowing the Congress to function normally to organise the ^elections. The telegram was sent after the Congress President had heard a broadcast of the Viceroy's announcement regarding elections.

Following is the text of the telegram :-

"Just heard radio announcement regarding ^elections to Central Legislature before next budget session and early general elections to Provincial Legislatures. I cannot help registering my organisation's emphatic protest for the Congress is still under ban, political prisoners and detenus in prisons, many others under severe handicaps, funds and properties confiscated, civil liberties drastically refused under war time ordinances and the Defence of India Act and Rules still in operation. Cessation of hostilities in Europe was immediately followed by withdrawal of wartime measures and restoration of normal conditions in England for electorate to express its will freely. It would be glaringly unjust to hold elections without first allowing Congress to function normally for a sufficient time to organise elections. - Abul Kalam Azad, " - (A.P.)

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Saturday, August 25, 1945.

RELEASE OF ALL POLITICALS

Maulana Azad On Congress Demand Before
Any Fresh Talk For Settlement

(From Our Special Representative)

RAWALPINDI, Aug. 23,

That release of all political prisoners and detenus
whether connected with ¹⁹¹⁴~~1914~~, 1921, 1930, 1940 or 1942
movements shall be demanded before any fresh talk with the
Govt. for ending the deadlock could be resumed was the
reply given by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President,
to a question by a prominent Pindi Congress leader, who
saw the Congress President and Pandit ^{Nehru}~~Nehru~~ at Srinagar,
whether negotiations with the Govt. of India would be taken
from where it was broken at Simla or quite afresh.

The Congress President further told that the demand
for Constituent Assembly would also be made as circumstances
had changed due to cessation of hostilities and there was
no question of interim arrangement. Some Muslim leaders wanted
to exploit existing mutual distrust between the Hindus and the
Muslims. The first essential requirement, therefore, at the
present hour, was to create trust and good will between the
sister communities in India. If the Nationalist Muslims,
Maulana Sahib added, could forge united front and organise
themselves on sound footing they could easily defeat the Muslim
League.

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Saturday, August 25, 1945.

BAN ON SOCIALIST PARTY

MAULANA AZAD URGES REMOVAL

Congress Organisation Cannot Be Deemed
Free With Such Restrictions

SRINAGAR (Kashmir), Aug. 23.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement to the press: "It is a matter for satisfaction that several provincial governments have now taken steps to lift ban on Congress and I hope further steps will soon be taken to restore civil liberties in the fullest measure to enable the electorate to exercise its will in an atmosphere of full freedom."

"The release of all political prisoners and detenus of all categories and the cancellation of all restrictions and unexecuted warrants of arrest must follow and follow quickly to complete the process of restoring normality. Even before the end of war was clearly in sight, the Viceroy was pleased to recognise that there was "much to forgive and forget on both sides."

"After the end of hostilities what is immediately wanted in India is a new start with all bitterness of the past completely wiped out. The dead past, which was the outgrowth of the abnormal circumstances brought about by the tragic world upheaval must be left behind to bury its dead.

The foundation of a new India in a new world must be laid on the main rock of general goodwill, freedom and willing co-operation. In the light of this conception of the future I cannot understand why any exceptions should be made and allowed to rankle in the body politics. The exceptions so

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far reported include the Congress Socialist Party. Whatever might have been the point of view of the Government engaged in the prosecution of war, not only the spirit of forgive and forget but the general political situation in the country at the end of the war demands that the past should not be carried over into the future."

The President says: "Surely the Labour Government of England should be the last to look askance at the Socialist Party of India, which is a section within the Congress. If they are supposed to remain under ban, the Congress organisation as whole cannot be said to be free ^{of} ~~of~~ it. I earnestly hope that the Socialist Party and all other patriotic organisations will soon be released from the embargo under which they are placed at present and all of them will be allowed to function normally at an early date and to participate in the ^{forthcoming} ~~forthcoming~~ elections and in the shaping of their country's destiny.

" I have not the slightest doubt that such a general revocation of the past with all its bitter memories will bring about that feeling among the dynamic sections of political workers and thinkers in the country, which is indispensable for determining India's future relations with England in an atmosphere free from the dead weight of the past."

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Sunday, August 26, 1945.

LEGAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES

Azad Advises Normal Working

SRINAGAR, Aug. 24.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has telegraphed Acharya Kripalani, General Secretary of the Indian National Congress to instruct all Congress Committees, wherever the ban has been lifted, to resume normal activities, including the enrolment of members and preliminary preparations for general election.

The President has also asked the Secretary to call for reports from all Provincial Congress Committees about the general situation in the provinces and other relevant matters.

He also says that with the restoration of normal activities by the Congress Committees all authority will reside in them and the substitute Committees and Associations formed during the continuance of the ban may merge in the regularly constituted or appointed Congress Committees, Provincial or otherwise.

Maulana Azad says that as soon as the remaining members of the A.I.C.C. are released, an emergent meeting of the A.I.C.C. will be summoned. - (A.P.).

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Monday, August 27, 1945.

PREMATURE END OF A LIFE OF PROMISE

AZAD ON SUBHAS BOSE'S DEATH

Immediate Release of Members Of His Family

U r g e d

SRINAGAR, Aug. 25.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement on the reported death of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose :

"The tragic circumstances in which Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is reported to have died in exile will be learnt with grief in India. From his youthful days he was passionately devoted to the cause of Indian freedom and pursued his aim with uncommon zeal and singlemindedness. He attained a high place in the estimation of his compatriots at an early age and was rewarded with the highest office in the gift of the nation. His patriotism was beyond doubt and but for the wrong step he took at a critical juncture he might have been in our midst to-day. It is extremely sad and tragic that a life of much promise has met with a premature end in circumstances which everyone in India will regard with sorrow.

"I cannot help thinking to-day of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and other members of the family who came under a cloud of suspicion on account of the deceased's ill-fated association with Axis-Powers. They have suffered incarceration for a long period. Now that the war has ended and even Subhas Chandra Bose is no more, there is no reason left for prolonging the incarceration of any of them any longer. Demand for their release has been repeatedly made by influential sections of their countrymen and I earnestly hope that Government will no longer hesitate to set them free." - (A.P.)

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Saturday, September, 1, 1945.

THEY ACTED ON HIGHER PRINCIPLES

LEADERS OF INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

Trial by Court Martial Lacks Validity,
Says Maulana Azad

SRINAGAR, Aug. 31:

^{the}
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement : " The Government's decision about the prisoners of the commonly known Indian National Army while recognising the special circumstances of the case proposes that the leaders of the army should be tried by court martial and law should take its course. This ~~sounds~~ ~~seems~~ ominous. It is commonly believed that in spite of grave error of judgement these persons had no intention to embrace the Axis cause but were moved by patriotic motive.

" The circumstances in which they are believed to have acted were extremely complex. Now that the war is over Indian sentiment and public opinion will in no case sanction extreme penalty. I would not like to enter into the intricacies of inter-national law but according to ^a legal opinion the question of their status as British Indian subjects is not ~~a~~ simple and their trial by court martial would lack validity. In as much as the peculiar circumstances of these cases attract the saving provisions of the international law their rights and liabilities should be judged by higher morals and principles of international customs. In ~~any~~ case it should not be forgotten that Indian sentiments and feelings in respect of the Indian National Army would in no case allow extreme penalty to be meted out to those who were the victims of wholly unprecedented and unexpected circumstances and who acted with no motive other than that of patriotism. If the combatant enemies receive benefits of international law and custom ~~and~~ the nationals of the country under foreign rule are morally entitled to nothing less".- (U.P.)

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QUESTION OF SELF - DETERMINATION

Maulana Azad To Place Issue Before Working Committee Meeting

SRINAGAR, Sept. 4:

The Associated Press learns from reliable sources that the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, wishes to place the issue of self-determination before the Working Committee at its forthcoming meeting at Poona so that a detailed statement on the self-determination question fully clarifying the Congress attitude could be issued.

Maulana Azad feels that contradictory interpretations are being given to the Congress attitude creating a lot of misunderstanding and hence he considers it necessary that as far as possible all doubts must be removed.

The Congress President, and Mr. Asaf Ali are giving deep thought to this question and invitations extended to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni, for the forthcoming Working Committee meeting are more than significant in this connection.

STATEMENT EXPLAINED

On his attention being drawn to some reactions to his recent statement about self-determination. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, said : "A careful examination of the Congress resolution~~d~~/ and my last statement on the subject of self-determination will make it clear to anyone that it is the population of a well-defined unit or area whose right to self-determination is recognised. Obviously if a considerable majority of population of such a region are Muslims their decision will be the decision of the area concerned. But it does not mean ~~the~~ disfranchisement of minorities living in ~~these~~ regions.

September 5, 1945

I have, therefore, said in so many words that in whichever region the Muslims are in a majority they need have no apprehension that a decision which is not their own will be imposed on them. With this assurance made plain it is for them now to examine the merits of the proposals for separation or accession to the Indian union in an atmosphere free from extraneous interference with their choice. Extraneous interference here refers to the decisions taken by person not living in the areas concerned. I am deliberately confining myself to broad principle of self-determination and do not desire to examine its implications in detail. In brief, both the Congress resolution and my explanatory statement concern themselves with territorial units and not exclusive religious communities." - (A.P.)

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Thursday,
September, 6, 1945

CONGRESS & COMING ELECTION

Adult Franchise To be Demanded:

Maulana Azad's Views

SRINAGAR, Sept. 5 - The Associated Press of India reliably understands the the Congress Working Committee at its forthcoming meeting in Poona will discuss the question of restricted franchise, especially for the Central Legislature, in the coming general elections.

Talks with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President and Mr. Asaf Ali, Member of the Working Committee reveal that the Congress would demand adult suffrage or something reasonably nearer to adult suffrage and would not object to the postponement of the elections for a brief period if Government agree to expand the scope of suffrage and consequently prepare new electoral rolls.

Congress leaders maintain that when many vital issues concerning the future destiny of India are to be decided by the newly elected legislatures, it is manifestly unjust to ignore several millions of potential voters who ~~will~~ by all canons of democracy have a right to express their opinion on important national problems facing the country. It is pointed out that the Congress alone has been consistently pressing this issue for more than 25 years.

It is also learned that the Congress Working Committee will draft the Congress election manifesto and place it before the A.I.C.C. Every effort will be made to remove Muslim suspicions on the question of self-determination - (A.P.).

Friday, Sept. 7, 1945

PRIORITY OF VISIT TO PUNJAB

AZAD'S DECISION

Setting House In Order After Iftikharuddin's
Resignation

SRINAGAR, Sept. 5 - It is understood that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has given priority to his visit to the Punjab immediately after the A.I.C.C. session as he is deeply interested in helping the Punjab Congress Committee to see its house in order. Rivalries resulting in Mian Iftikharuddin's resignation from Presidentship have been causing him great concern. He has discussed the whole situation with Mian Iftikharuddin during the last few days.

Maulana Azad's announcement that the selection of Congress candidates for contesting the forthcoming elections will be made by the Central Parliamentary Committee is aimed at removing fears and suspicions of certain Congress circles within the Punjab Congress that party influences would prevail in the selection and that certain groups might be victimised.

The Congress President, it is learnt, wanted to appoint ~~to~~ a committee called the Punjab Provincial Financial Board for raising funds for election works. In fact, he drew up a list of names and at the same time wanted to make it clear that he may add further names if he considered it necessary during his visit to Punjab. But at the last moment he changed his mind and now he prefers to appoint this committee when he is in Lahore.

Maulana Azad, moreover, feels that almost all prominent Punjab Congressmen would be present in Bombay during the A.I.C.C. session. This, he feels, would afford him further opportunity for a frank discussion with the rival groups.-(A.P.).

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Friday, Sept. 7, 1945

A Z A D ' S S T A T E M E N T

SRINAGAR, Sept. 5 - Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following statement on the Punjab Congress affairs :-

"I regret that the pressing demands of the situation have constrained me to postpone my immediate engagement in Lahore and now I have to proceed direct to Bombay. However, as soon as the business of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. is concluded, I shall pay a visit to the Punjab.

"It seems to be necessary to inform the Congress circles concerned that I was fully apprised by Mian Iftikharuddin of his desire to be relieved of his responsibilities as President of the Provincial Congress Committee. His resignation will take effect after the next meeting of the Provincial Committee which has been summoned on the twentyseventh of this month.

In the meantime having regard to the importance of the forthcoming elections to the Central Legislature it is essential that preliminary work in that connection should not be delayed even by a day. The selection of candidates will be made by the central parliamentary sub-committee. The parliamentary sub-committee may find it necessary to appoint a special representative to supervise the entire work connected with the elections. But Congress Committees should be individually canvassed for any candidates the Congress may put up." - (A.P.)

Saturday, September 8, 1945

BETTER TO POSTPONE ELECTIONS

CONGRESS STAND EXPLAINED

Maulana Azad Demands Widening Of Franchise

ISSUES AT STAKE RECALLED

Plea For Withdrawal Of Bans On Allied Organisations
& Socialists

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NEW DELHI, Sept. 7 - The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to-day preferred the postponement of elections with a view to widen the franchise and revise the electoral rolls rather than^a holding the elections on the basis of the present incomplete electoral rolls.

"The Congress", he said, "has stood for adult suffrage for more than a quarter of a century and, therefore, it cannot view with equanimity the deprivation of tens of millions of potential voters.

"It is a matter for satisfaction that this is being realised in other quarters too and public protests are being lodged against the restricted franchise and defective electoral rolls on the basis of which the forthcoming elections are proposed to be held. It would be a travesty of the principle of representation to exclude the bulk of the population from expressing their will and exercising their choice of representatives either for forming governments or for the constitution making body.

"Any election held on the basis of existing electoral rolls will be entirely valueless for it cannot reflect the will of the bulk of the adult ~~XXXXXX~~ population of the country.

"Considering the fact that these elections will be a prelude to the constituent assembly and that the issues at stake are so vital a postponement of the elections is called for."

Saturday, September 8, 1945

BAN ON C.S.P

The Maulan Sahib hoped that the ban still in force on the Congress allied organisations would be lifted. He particularly referred to the Congress Socialist Party and said : " Now that the Congress is no longer an unlawful association and normal activities have been resumed, it is obvious that no party within the Congress can pursue any activity which has not the sanction of the Congress and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ therefore to place any party under a ban on the assumption that it is likely to act in defiance of the recognised Congress policy is wholly unjustifiable.

"If a party departs from the recognised Congress creed it will go outside the pale of the parent organisation and may then be held responsible for its independent activities. So long as this ban is not removed the Congress will not consider itself entirely free from it.

— (A.P.)

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INDIA PULSATING WITH NEW LIFE

MAULANA AZAD'S VIEW

Address To Workers Of Kashmir National Confce

SRINAGAR. Sept. 6 (Delayed): -

"India is passing through a critical phase of its political life. Our country is wide awake now and is pulsating with new life," observed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, addressing workers of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference this evening. Maulana Azad said "A change is bound to come in India, and no power on earth can prevent it. Indian states can not remain unaffected with changes in British India. There can be no two opinions about it."

^{Con}Continuing Maulana Azad said that signs of national will were present in Kashmir and the untiring work of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and the National Conference were responsible for it. He added, "Stand united. Do not annihilate your national life and national will by attending to petty questions and squabbles. You are fortunate in having a leader like Sheikh Abdullah and the way he has chosen in guiding the politics of Kashmir is correct."

Concluding the Congress President said during the last fifteen years a marked change had come over Kashmir due to ~~xxx~~ efforts of the National Conference and it was the duty of the people and workers to maintain the peace of progress with firmness and strength.

Both Maulana Azad and Mr. Asaf Ali are leaving to-morrow morning, by air for Delhi ^{en} ~~on~~ route to Bombay. (U.P.)

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Saturday, September 8, 1945

AZAD ARRIVES AT NEW DELHI

PRAISE FOR KASHMIRIS

No Appreciable Improvement of Health

NEW DELHI, Sept. 7 : Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President and Mr. Asaf Ali arrived here this afternoon from Srinagar by an American plane.

Maulana Azad said that he had a very comfortable journey. He thanked General Wheeler of the India Command for giving him transport facility.

The Congress President remarked that the Kashmir climate had not done him much good, probably because of his age.

A large number of Congressmen and others gathered outside the aerodrome, stopped Maulana Azad's car at the gate and gave him a reception. Shouts of "Maulana Azad Zindabad" were raised.

Maulana Azad drove to Mr. Asaf Ali's house where he will be staying for three days and then leave for Bombay.

Interviewed by the Associated Press of India on the eve of his departure from Kashmir, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, said : " ~~XX~~ I regret to say that I have not been able to benefit by the admittedly salubrious climate of Kashmir to the extent of my expect^{ta}tion . The blame does not attach to Kashmir, but to my physical capacity for recuperation. The season is just beginning to be pleasant and I suppose more beneficial than it has proved so far. But demands on my time will not permit a prolongation of my stay. I am going away with a heart full of gratitude ~~for~~^{for} generous hospitality and overwhelming kindness of many sincere friends among whom I count Shaikh Mohamed Abdullah and his colleagues.

"I have come to Kashmir after 15 years and I have found evidence of many pleasant changes in several directions. I have found a welcome spirit of national consciousness among the people of Kashmir for which Shaikh

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Mohamed Abdulla and his colleagues of the National Conference deserve to be congratulated. I confidently hope that this consciousness will help to improve the general condition of the masses and make for ever increasing utilisation of the rich resources of Kashmir and a higher standard of life."

VISIT TO NATIONAL CONFCE. OFFICE

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, and Mr. Asaf Ali visited the Mujahid Manzil, the head office of the National Conference at Srinagar last evening on special invitation of the National Conference. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Addressing the workers and the public who had gathered there in large numbers Maulana Azad made a reference to the great changes impending in India and observed that they would affect not only the future of British India but also of Indian States.

He paid warm tribute to the leaders and workers of National Conference who, he said, had brought about healthy and welcome changes among the people of Kashmir by awakening them. He praised the far-sightedness of Shaikh Mohammed Abdullah and his colleagues in rescuing nationalism from the narrow straits of sectarian politics. Regarding the faces of those who had gathered^{ed} there Maulana Azad said, "I have learnt from your faces your outspoken aspirations and determination to secure political and national emancipation."...- (A.P.).

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Sunday, September 9, 1945

AZAD'S OFFER TO LEAGUE

A.I.C.C. TO DISCUSS

Self-Determination For Muslims

(From Our Own Correspondent)

LAHORE, Sept. 7:- The forthcoming election, its scope and purpose, will be the main topic before the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. meetings, it was revealed to the 'Patrika' correspondent by a prominent Punjab Congressman who returned here after spending about a fortnight with Rashtrapati Azad in Kashmir.

Sitting in his little hut in Kashmir surrounded by the lovely natural sights of the high ranges of the Himalayas Azad is not only recuperating his health which has been shattered in the three years of state hospitality in the Ahmadnagar Fort but he is also planning the future of India's political life. Maulana Azad has been all these days thinking hard, feeling the pulse of the nation and is discussing matters with various people who are coming to Kashmir. Realistic as he is the Maulana sees both sides of the picture and is always eager to find the best solution to the most ^{complicated} ~~complicated~~ ~~just go back to 1935~~ ~~Not have complicated~~ problems.

The Maulana thinks that the "forthcoming election will have a far-reaching effect. It will not only be a mere demonstration of Congress strength and popularity but ^{its} ~~is~~ result will surely affect the future constitution of the country by laying the basis of India's Constituent Assembly".

Herein, according to my informant, the Maulana feels, lies the crux of the whole matter. Will the elections be held on the archaic electoral rolls, prepared, in some provinces, four or five years back ? What about the thousands of young boys and girls who should have earned their right of franchise now? These children of the soil, young and enthusiastic, steeled by the August 1942 fire, will they be debarred from casting their votes which it is hundred per-

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percent sure, will go in favour of the Congress ? Again, what about Central Assembly which is elected on the basis of the outdated 1919 consitution which can represent anything but the real voice of the people ? These are serious questions now engaging Rashtrapati Azad's mind. All these points will come up for discussion before the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. and Govt. might be asked to clarify these issues.

The Congress demand, it is understood will be to prepare the new electoral rolls for the Provincial Assemblies and to extend the right of franchise for election to the Central Assembly. The Congress may also ask Govt. to calrify what will be the position of the newly elected Assemblies. Will they just go back to 1935 Act or will they have the right to frame the new constitution of India leading the country to its goal of national independence ?

But one thing is sure, and that is that the Congress will make its attitude towards the Muslim question more clear. The Maulana's statement from Srinagar was a pointer to this direction. Congress will meet the Muslim League slogan of Pakistan with its scientific formula of self-determination for territorial units and approving of the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula officially. In Muslim constituencies the Congress candidates will face the electorates saying that the Congress accepted the principle of the self-determination for Muslims. With this Congress offer to the League they (the Muslims) can achieve their goal, as it gives them the right of secession in the areas where Muslims are in a majority, if of course, the residents of these areas want the same. This question will come both before the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. meetings and much heat is expected to be generated on this issue in Bombay on the third week of this month.

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GENERAL ELECTIONS AND GOVT. ATTITUDE

Maulana Azad On Need Of Uniform Policy

Bombay, Sept. 20:- The need for the various Provincial Governments in India to follow a uniform policy in the matter of forthcoming General Elections to the Provincial Assemblies with particular reference to revising the present electoral rolls which were prepared in 1941 was emphasised by the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a Press Conference to-day.

In this connection the Congress President asked the other Provincial Governments to follow the footsteps of the Bombay Government which had announced its decision to completely revise the electoral rolls so as to bring them up-to-date.

The Congress President also ~~XXXX~~ stressed the need for the Government of India and the Provincial Governments to release all political ~~XXXX~~ prisoners, remove all restrictions and bans on political meetings, processions and other demonstrations and do away with election disqualifications arising out of imprisonment extending over two years.

The Congress President, asserted that unless this is done the proper atmosphere for conducting the General Elections would not be created.

In this connection Maulana Azad traced the efforts Congress has been making since the that the/release of the members of the Working Committee in June last to create a new atmosphere of good-will and co-operation, but he regretted to have to point out that the response from the other side, particularly from certain Provincial Governments, was not helpful, though some positive action in this direction had been taken.

The Congress President at the very outset referred to the various resolutions passed by the Working Committee at Poona to be placed before the All India Congress Committee

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and said that among these, "I want to draw your attention to the resolution regarding the elections. These elections are of two categories one for the Central Assembly and the other for the ~~XXXX~~ Provincial Assemblies. As regards the Centre, the Congress has always maintained that the existing Legislative Assembly was out of date apart from its very restricted and narrow basis. As regards the provinces the Government of India Act of 1935 widened the franchise to a certain extent. We wanted the same widening of franchise to be applied to the Central Assembly.

CENTRAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The Government could have, if they wanted brought the Central Assembly to the same basis as the provinces in regard to franchise. But Government did nothing in this regard though a Provincial Governors' Conference was held.

There is a meaning in our contesting provincial elections but there is no meaning in our contesting the elections to the Central Assembly, as it does not lead to any change in Government.

One or two provinces even suggested that we should boycott the elections to the Central Assembly. This was the matter which engaged our attention at Poona for a number of days.

WHY CONGRESS WILL CONTEST

After weighing all the considerations, the ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ Working Committee came to the conclusion that the Congress must contest the elections to the Centre to record the Congress demand "for immediate transfer of power".

"We came to the conclusion that we cannot afford to boycott these elections. On the contrary it is imperative that we must capture as many seats as possible, so as to demonstrate the strength behind our demand for immediate transfer of power. What we should do after the elections to the Central Assembly is another matter. This is a question which will have to be considered by the Working Committee

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in the light of circumstances then prevailing.

"The other important question which the committee considered in coming to a decision on the question of elections was the lack of uniformity on the part of the various provincial governments in regard to the policy and procedure to be adopted in the case of provincial elections. While some Provincial Governors have already dissolved the assemblies, in some provinces there is absolutely no indication as to what the Government proposes to do. In all provinces except Bombay no serious effort has been made to revise the electoral rolls prepared in 1941 and bring them up-to-date. In this connection I would ask the Governors of other provinces to copy the example of the Bombay Governor who has announced his Government's decision to completely revise the electoral rolls so as to bring them up-to-date. I must ask the Governors of other provinces to do likewise if the elections are not to prove a joke. Many voters who were on the rolls in 1941 may have ceased to exist; thousands of persons who are qualified to exercise the franchise have not been put on the rolls. These have to be included if they are not to lose their right of vote. This is a very important point on which the Congress feels very strongly and, therefore, I must emphasise the need for the various Governments to follow a uniform policy in this respect.

If the various Provincial Governments do not revise the electoral rolls so as to bring them up-to-date, it means that there is no meaning in the forthcoming elections.

DISQUALIFICATION DUE TO IMPRISONMENT

"Another important point on which the Congress feels very strongly is the one relating to disqualification arising out of imprisonment. Some friends who came from Sind to-day told me that the Sind Government expressed its inability to remove disqualifications arising out of ~~imprison-~~

Sept. 21, 1945

imprisonments, extending over two years during the 1942 ~~movement~~ movement. We must ask the British Government and Lord Wavell to adopt a uniform policy in this regard and remove immediately such disqualifications. This again is a very important test so far as the Congress is concerned. Government took these men into jail and it is, therefore, Government's duty to see that they are not disqualified from contesting the elections. If the Government does not remove this disqualification it definitely means that the Government restricts the scope of the choice of the candidates by the Congress.

"This is a serious hurdle in the way of the Congress and the Government must remove this without any delay.

"I must also ask Government to create a new atmosphere by releasing all political prisoners irrespective of whether they have been connected with the 1942 movement or not.

RELEASE OF ALL POLITICALS

"I wrote to Lord Wavell on July 16 stressing the need for the Government of India to release all prisoners. Since then many prisoners have been released but there are still many behind prison bars. Furthermore, bans and restrictions on political activities continue in many parts of the country. These are not conducive to create the proper conditions and atmosphere for conducting a free election. (Message incomplete).

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Thursday,
September 22, 1945.

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Self - Determination

Azad On Significance of The Poona Resolution

BOMBAY, Sept. 20 - The Congress President replying to a correspondent at the Press Conference (reported yesterday) regarding the confusion arising out of the latest resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee at Poona on the question of self-determination for the minorities, said that there was no confusion at all. What the Working Committee had done was to re-state the position taken up by the Committee in the three resolutions passed since April 6, 1942. The first was the Committee's resolution passed at Delhi during the Cripps' negotiations which emphasised that the Congress was opposed to a division of India, but it would not compel any group of people in a particular area to remain in the Indian union if they of their own free will desired to keep out. This was a positive attitude of the Congress on an important question. The Congress laid down its policy in this resolution that it stood for a united India, but would not compel the people of a particular area to remain within the union if they did not like to do so. Then there was the second resolution known as the Jagatnarain Lal resolution which again expressed the view that the Congress was opposed to the division of India. The third resolution was the one passed on August 8, 1942 which declared the policy of the Congress in clear terms that it was in favour of a federal united India, with fullest autonomy to the units.

What the Working Committee at Poona had done was only to combine all these three resolutions so as to remove any misconceptions.

The Poona resolution, the Congress President maintained, was quite clear and in accordance with his statement from Srinagar. He had received a number of enquiries stating that Jagatnarain's resolution was the only resolution which

September 22, 1945

held the field. He wanted to clear this misconception and, therefore, the Poona resolution was passed. This resolution has clearly stated the positive attitude of the Congress on an important question and indicated the maximum extent to which the Congress is prepared to go in the matter of allowing self-determination.--(A.P.)

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Monday, October 8, 1945

FUTURE STATUS OF MUSSALMANS

AZAD'S ASSURANCE

Security Only Through Congress Principles

No Good Discussing Past

"We Are On The Last Stage Of Our Journey" Says President

Lahore, October 7 -

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that he was happy to find himself amongst so many friends and dear ones. To his many muslims friends present there he would say that India's political struggle had passed through various stages.

"But now, since the caravan started fifty years ago, we are on the last stage of our journey. The end of the journey cannot be long. That much is certain. We have survived ^{hardships} ~~hardships~~ and difficulties on our ~~long~~ arduous way. But we kept ~~pressing~~ pressing onward, onward to the goal. So all the arguments, and discussions and debates as to the past problems have no relation to the present when the caravan is almost nearing its destination. Fix your gaze on the final objective."

The Congress President said that no doubt there was complexities in the political situation and unfortunately there was an air of mistrust and doubt and suspicion ~~between~~ ~~the different organisations~~ between the different organisations

There were doubts and suspicions in the minds of muslims too. Hence, as far as the future of the country was ~~concerned~~ concerned these doubts had to be removed. On ^{This} ~~these~~ there were no two opinions. At the same time the political struggle of India had reached its final ~~stage~~ phase.

There were varied facts of the communal question, he said. He was not going to mention them at the moment. "What is to be muslims' status in the India of the future ? What is good for muslims and what is bad ?

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How can the Muslims make their future safe ?
What is in the interests of the country as a whole these are questions to which we can find answers if we honestly and sincerely try." -

TRUE AND FALSE - THE DISTINCTION

"What is then to be the touchstone to distinguish the true from the false" ? asked Maulan Azad. He said : That touchstone for Muslims is this. That they should see whether by following the path to which we are inviting them they can safeguard their future. I can say this with confidence and I say this deliberately in the light of the realities which I have tried to see for the past thirty years - that the prescriptions of the various Muslim organisations would not remedy the ills of the Mussalmans. We cannot take away the Mussalmans from the cold, hard realities of the times by a few sentimental slogans or catchwords. In the light of these realities our path is the only right path. Maybe, for some time the Muslims may be deceived by laying green pastures before them. But in this desert of delusion they will always be following the ever receding will 'o-the-wisp and will never reach the desired Oasis (loud appalause)".

FACE REALITIES

"That is why", he said, "we are inviting the Muslims to follow the way we are embarked upon, ~~for this way we are embarked upon~~, for this ~~way~~ alone will ensure their future in the country. I am convinced ~~that~~ that that is how we can face the realities.

Maulana Azad said : "From the world of fantasy let us step down to the world of realities. Then alone we shall be able to reach the right conclusion. We should measure ourselves by the standard we have set to ourselves, and that standard is ~~how~~ we can ensure Muslim interests. All discussions and suspicions should cease in the light of the acceptance of the principles (of self-determination) about which there have been so much debate. That discussion

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and debate is now meaningless in the context of the present problems.

WHEN DUTY DEMANDS . . .

The Congress President in the earlier part of the speech said he had been compelled to come to the Punjab to look to certain urgent matters, which, it was thought, could not be handled without his presence, and he came despite the fact that he fell ill at Bombay and at Delhi and despite the fact that his health had been running downhill during the past three months and doctors had warned him.

"But" he said, "We cannot run away from the path of duty. When duty demands, even our life should not matter to us. A worker's status in the country had to be judged by the degree to which he forgets himself in the national work. To the degree he forgets himself he commands the status he deserves. I assure you that I am attempting to weigh myself in the same balance in which others are to be weighed. When duty calls even our life assumes a second place." (Cheers).

Maulana Daood Gaznavi, the newly elected President of the Punjab Congress, welcomed the Congress President.

- (A.P.)

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tober 10, 1945

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INDISPENSABLE FOR FAIR ELECTIONS

Azad's Demand For Politicals' Release[&] Franchise
Facilities For Servicemen[^]

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, in his statement on Thursday asks how there can be free and fair elections in the country ~~where~~^{When} meetings cannot be held without the sanction of the police and candidates and ~~the~~^{their} supporters remained confined in ~~the~~ jails.

The following is the text of Maulana Azad's statement :-

"The British Premier has more than once said that elections in India would be free and fair. Mr. Henderson, the Under Secretary of state for India, has also recently stated in the House of Commons that 'there would be no restrictions on the right of free speech'. The statement is untenable in the context of the present Indian situation where bans exist on public meetings even in ~~city~~^{cities} like Calcutta and Dacca or districts like Midnapore. // Besides, large numbers of political prisoners and detenus are still in jail. Among them are many who have been, are or may be members of the legislatures.

"To keep them under restraint is to restrict our choice in the selection of candidates, and also to deprive us of some of our finest workers during the election campaign.

"How can there be free and fair election when meetings cannot be held without the sanction of the police, and candidates and their supporters remain confined in jails ?

INDIAN FIGHTING FORCES

"The case of the Indian fighting forces presents another glaring example of restriction on free election. Lord Wavell, in paying tribute to their splendid contribution to the victory of the United Nations, declared that ~~these~~^{their} opinions and views must be given due and proper weight.

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October 10, 1945

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at the time of the **framing** of India's future constitution. He also declared that every facility would be given to them to exercise their vote at the time of the next general election. It now appears that the military authorities are either unable or unwilling to fulfil those promises and the reward of the gallantry of India's fighting forces is ^{their} ~~there~~ virtual disenfranchisement in an election which is bound to influence the future of India. I have received complaints in Bombay, Lahore, and elsewhere that service personnel entitled to vote are not allowed to exercise their franchise in an unfettered manner. As for the franchise of personnel stationed outside India, Mr. Henderson has informed the House of Commons that "practical difficulties are such that it is not possible to overcome them in the time available."

"All difficulties were overcome for the British general elections though the war had not yet ended at the time.

→ "Even personnel in the forests of Burma were enabled and encouraged to vote. I would, therefore, urge upon the authorities to make necessary arrangements for enabling the Indian fighting forces to exercise their votes fully and freely as was done in the case of their British Comrades.

POLICIES OF PARTIES

"The authorities must also allow them the opportunity to know the programme and policy of different political parties so that they can exercise their franchise with discrimination and knowledge.

"The barriers which now insulate them from Indian public life must go. How otherwise can we call the elections free and fair in the face of the virtual X disenfranchisement of large **members** of civil and military personnel ?"

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aturday,
tober 20, 1945

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CONGRESS GRAVELY CONCERNED
SITUATION IN S.E. ASIA

Steps To Be Taken To Prevent Use Of Indian
Men & Materials

Maulana Azad's Announcement

Workers Of The World Uniting Behind 'This True People's War'

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad,
issued on 20th Oct. 1945, at Calcutta
in a statement says that "things in Indonesia and Indo-
China have now come to a point when the Indian National
Congress will have seriously to consider what steps to adopt
to prevent the use of Indian men and materials against
Asiatic Peoples fighting for their freedom.

Maulana Azad says, "Conflicting reports have tried
to create confusion regarding the situation in Indonesia
and Indo-China but one thing stands out clearly in the midst
of all of them. That is the unfinching resolve of the
people of Java and Indo-China to secure for themselves
the freedom of democracy which western statesmen have declare
to be the chief objective of the present global war.
Indians who are fighting for their own freedom and demo-
cracy cannot but sympathise and fall in line with the stru-
ggle of Indonesians and Annamite nationalists.

"The character of this true peoples' war has been
instinctively recognised both by the workers and the exploi-
ted classed of the world and their imperialist masters
and exploiters. We, therefore, find on the one hand the
deck and the port workers of China and Australia refusing
to load ~~these~~ munitions and other war materials for use
against these East-Asiatic Nationalists, and on the other
hand the British, French and Dutch imperialists joining
forces for restoring the status.

BRITISH WAR MINISTER'S STATEMENT

"The British War Minister was widely reported to
have stated that the British have no obligation to fight

October 20, 1945

against the Nationalists to restore the old colonial regime. But Britain's Socialist Premier hastened to reassure conservative members of Parliament that no such statement was ever made by the War Secretary, and now he clearly affirms that the British are under a strong moral obligation to their Dutch allies to help them assuming full control of Java.

DEEP RESENTMENT

The events in Java and Indo-China have caused no surprise to Indian Nationalists, but the use of Indian troops to suppress the aspirations of Nationalists there, have caused deep resentment. Things have now come to a point when the Indian National Congress will have to consider seriously what steps to adopt to prevent the use of Indian men and materials against Asiatic peoples fighting for their freedom.

The dock workers of China and Australia have set an example which Indian port workers and seamen can well emulate. I would appeal to the British labour party to realise that the British support for French or Dutch imperialists will empty the reservoir of goodwill which they had built up among oppressed peoples of the world by their past pledges and promises."

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Thursday,
November 1, 1945

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PLAN FOR ASIATIC POTSDAM

CONGRESS PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT

'Suggestion Made At Right And
Opportune Moment'

INDIA AS A NATURAL VENUE

Extension Of The Proposal To Cover Other Eastern
Countries Suggested

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad welcomed the suggestion of U.Aung San, leader of the Burmese nationalists for holding a South Asiatic Countries' conference and said in an interview with the Associated Press of India on Wednesday that India would seem to be a natural venue for such a conference.

U.Aung San's suggestion, Maulana Azad said, had been made at a right and opportune moment. Indians realised that freedom's battle was one and indivisible and many here had been thinking of uniting the forces of all exploited peoples of Asia and the East for achieving their common goal.

The Congress President would like to extend the proposal to cover other Eastern Countries under foreign domination and said that India was not only geographically the centre of such exploited lands, but in a way she formed the key to the liberation of all colonial and semi-colonial peoples, and would seem to be a natural venue for such a conference.

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-(A.P.)

Friday,
September 2, 1945

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CO-OPERATION WITH NON-MOSLEMS

Congress President's Convincing Reply To League Leader
(From Our Special Representative)

BOMBAY, Oct. 28.- When Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, was staying in Kashmir, an influential Muslim Leaguer enquired of him in a lengthy letter if the attitude of the Maulana, being a savant of Islam and an authority on Quoran, was consistent with the injunctions of the Holy Quoran which enjoins upon Muslims to withhold co-operation from non-Muslims.

In the course of his reply, Maulana in his characteristic scholarly style explained the true significance of the various verses which had been cited in support of the question, and enunciated the true principles of Islam in this connection.

MAULANA'S LETTER

Dear Friend,

Nasir Bagh, Srinagar,
August 28, 1945.

Your letter. It depends entirely upon the facts and circumstances of a particular case, environments and exigencies of time, whether a Muslim should join the Congress or any other organisation. Everybody is at liberty to form his own opinion according to his light and way of thinking. But it is not advisable to bring into such controversies the ~~teachings~~ teachings of Islam without proper justification and twist or ^{misinterpret} ~~miserpret~~ the verses of the Holy Quoran.

The present political situation is temporary, but the teachings of Islam are not so. They have a permanent value. To twist them to suit the present temporary condition is extremely regrettable.

The verses that you have quoted are in reference to the particular events of those times. The believers in other ^{regions} and heathens were ranged against Islam. This brought about two distinct and belligerent parties. Muslims were on one side and the other party comprised the Jews, Christians and heathens. Hence, the God's

November 2, 1945

Tanha?

command, "Those who are with us should have nothing to do with the enemies. If any one keeps any relation with the enemy's camp he shall be treated as one of them (enemies). Consequently, the verses of sura (chapter) Tanha and sura Infal all refer to particular cases. They do not refer to the peacetime affairs. The real commandments of the Holy Quoran which are for all time, are contained in sura (chapter) Mumtahena. They are distinct and clear. The passage is as follows :

"Those who wage war on your religion, drive you away from your home exile you or help those who commit the above acts, God forbids you to be friends with or co-operate with such persons. One who co-operates with such persons shall be treated as an enemy."

It is now clear from the above context that this commandment is restricted to those persons who wage war on our religion and compel us to go in exile. Otherwise, if they, i.e., non Muslims, do not commit the abovementioned acts, the cooperation in wordly matters and mutual dealings and help are not forbidden, if that is warranted by the facts of the particular case and exigencies of time.

THE PROPHET'S WAY

We have before us the life of our Prophet (peace be on Him). He entered into a treaty of alliance and mutual cooperation with non-Muslims of Medina and adjacent places as against the Qureshi tribe of Mecca. This treaty is known as "sahifa". One of its clauses says that "henceforward we shall work jointly and in complete cooperation as if we are ONE NATION (ummate wahid)".

It is now for 150 years the British Government has been in India. People enjoy services under the Government and spend their whole life in furthering their objectives and wishes. The pertinent question is whether while thus co-operating with the British Christians did they ever remember these injunctions of the Holy Quoran.

September 2, 1945

Islam is a message of general benevolence, affection and human fraternity. Its outlook is not so narrow as you have depicted.

I would tell you a very common place thing. The Quoran has permitted the ~~CHRISTIAN AND JEW WOMEN~~ Muslims to marry the Christian and Jew women. Matrimonial relations create a very strong tie. If the marriage proves successful, a man may become a wor^{shipper} of his wife. No other relation would prove stronger than this. Had the Quoran wished to forbid co-operation and mutual help with non-Muslims for all time and in all circumstances it would not have permitted its followers to choose for his better half and mistress of his home, a non-Muslim women.

If you think that Muslims should not co-operate with the non-Muslims in the political activities of the country, you are at liberty to hold that view. You may find out reasons to do so.

But for God's sake don't bring in Quoran and distort its teachings to conform to your pet views. Please do not make these Holy verses a tool of our ^{whims} ~~shims~~ and caprices.

- Abul Kalam. |

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Sunday,
November 4, 1945

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I. N. A. ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

Congress President's Statement :
Pt. Nehru To Organise it

The Congress President has nominated Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Raghunandan Saran and Miss Khurshid Naoroji to organise an I.N.A. Enquiry Committee in order to collect necessary information and deal with correspondence from relatives and friends about I.N.A. men.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has issued the following statement announcing the formation of the above Enquiry Committee :- When the Congress formed the I.N.A. Defence Committee the chief object in mind was necessary action for legal defence. It has now become evident that there are other important questions in connection with the I.N.A. that require proper attention. Hundreds of enquiries are pouring into the I.N.A. Defence Committee regarding the present whereabouts and health of ^{members} ~~numbers~~ of the I.N.A. The anxiety of relatives and friends of men of the I.N.A. is natural, but since the men are scattered in different jails and are prisoners of war camps in various parts of India, it is impossible for the I.N.A. Defence Committee to deal with such enquiries. The volume of work of the Defence Committee will not permit their attending to any ^{other} ~~order~~ work. In these circumstances I consider a separate committee for attending to other questions affecting the men of the I.N.A. necessary. I, therefore, nominate Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Raghunandan Saran and Miss Khursid Naoroji to organise an I.N.A. Enquiry Committee in order to collect the necessary information and deal with correspondence from relatives and friends.

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Tuesday,
November 6, 1945.

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INDONESIAN'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
CONGRESS SUPPORT

Azad Praises Indian Seamen's Stand In Australia

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has assured the Indonesian Independence Committee, Sydney, of all possible help and support. He has also congratulated Indian Seamen in Australia for holding up ships in support of the Indonesian struggle.

This follows the receipt of two cables by the Congress President from Sydney. One of them, from Mr. D. Singh, on behalf of the Indian Seamen's Union, said : "Four Dutch ships from Sydney will not sail to any port of Indonesia because Indian seamen have ^{held up} ~~helped~~ ships in support of the Indonesian struggle. Please cable us what India is doing!"

The other cable was from Mr. Raden, President of the Indonesian Independence Committee, Sydney, and said: "The action of Indian seamen holding up four Dutch ships going to Indonesia is greatly appreciated by Indonesians here. They would like to know what action India has taken."

The Congress President has congratulated the Indian seamen in Australia for the stand and assured the Indonesian Committee of all possible help and support.

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Friday,
November 24, 1945

AZAD CONDEMNS POLICE FIRING

Govt.'s Unimaginative Statesmanship :

Students Urged To Cultivate Discipline

(From Our Allahabad Office)

THURSDAY, Nov. 22 :- In a special interview to the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" this afternoon regarding the firing on a student demonstration in Calcutta Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, said that he could not in the absence of full and detailed report of the happenings give his considered judgment on the incident but his first reaction was one of indignation and abhorrence at the action of the police in firing on an unarmed crowd.

These young boys, Maulana Azad said, were only expressing their sympathy and concern for the members of the I.N.A. and there could have been no serious risk if they had been allowed to proceed to the Dalhousie Square. After all, taking out processions and shouting slogans were the inherent rights of citizens and in India there was no other method of recording our protest against or disapproval of Government action and policy.

The incident at Calcutta was not isolated but a continuation of the attack on peaceful processionists at Lahore and Lucknow. It was shameful that even the girl students had not been spared in such attacks and reprisals by the police.

While condemning the Government policy, continued the Congress President, he could not refrain from comment on the action of the processionists. It was all to the good that Indian students had developed courage and endurance but without discipline and order these qualities were bound to go to waste. There must also be regard for the advice of responsible leadership. While he admired the courage of the demonstrators in standing their ground even after there was firing, he could not help feeling that this courage would have been of greater service to the national cause if it was subject to control and discipline by ~~recog~~

September 24, 1945

recognised leadership. It was reported that Mr. Kiran Sankar Ray appealed to the demonstrators before the firing took place and later Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and other responsible persons appealed to them to disperse. The Congress President felt that the demonstrators would have served India better if they had listened to their own leaders at every stage and in spite of grave provocation. The strength of an army is in its discipline which makes it obey even unwelcome orders and India to-day needed a disciplined army of workers.

In conclusion Maulana Azad expressed his deep sympathy and concern for persons killed or injured and stated that he hoped that the Government would even at this stage realise that imaginative statesmanship alone can solve the grave problems which to-day face India.

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unjay.
 10th Nov. 1945

AZAD DEMANDS ENQUIRY

Police Firing : No Demonstration

Till Necessary Directives

MIRZAPORE, Nov. 23.- The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has issued the following statement on the happenings in Calcutta :

"The reports^a I have received of happenings in Calcutta have caused profound grief and shock. Firing was resorted to on five occasions, and led to the death of 14 and injury to over 150 persons. It is essential that there should be searching inquiry into the case of the tragic incident.

I would in the meantime appeal to the public to restore and maintain order and discipline. Reports indicate that in certain cases crowds refused to listen to the directions of responsible Congress leaders. It is also reported that some military lorries were destroyed. Such actions on our part must be condemned. I would urge upon the public in general and students community in particular to have discipline and non-violence as the basis of the Congress creed. Slogans may be useful as demonstrations but freedom can be achieved only by exercise of untold suffering under proper leadership.

My earnest appeal is that there should be no further processions or demonstrations till the necessary directives come from responsible Congress quarters.

I am watching the situation anxiously and with concern." - (A.P.)

nday,
mber 3, 1945

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CONSERVE CONGRESS STRENGTH

No Time For Frittering Away Now : Maula Azad's
Advice To People

ALLAHABAD , Dec. 1 : - "The Present policy of the Congress was to maintain peaceful, undisturbed conditions in the country and to fight the elections in accordance with the Congress manifesto," declared Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President addressing mass meeting at Gandhi Ashram, Mirzapur to-day.

"The next step", he indicated "will be taken after the elections were over and as and when the conditions demanded them."

He warned the people that the strength which Congress had gathered during the years in the struggle for the freedom of the country, particularly the strength which they had gathered in the last three years was the national wealth and it was ^{under their false promises.} not to be frittered away, have to conserve this strength for the future."

POLICE FIRING CONDEMNED

Maulana Azad condemned the action of the police on opening fire on student processions at Calcutta, Bombay, Lahore and other places and said the students were justified in taking out processions as a protest against the trial of the Indian National Army officers and men. These incidents ~~X~~he said had caused considerable concern and were agitating their minds. They showed that the, Labour Party had missed the opportunity they had and had proved that the Labour Government was no better than the previous Government as far as India was concerned.

Maulana Azad asserted that they had no faith in the promises made by the British Government and that to win the freedom of their country they relied on their own strength and their own power.

September 3, 1945

WORLD SITUATION

Maulana Azad earlier in his speech described the situation all over the world as very critical, and said that even after five years of war peace was not in sight and many countries were still struggling for their freedom. The peoples of Java and Indo-China and other countries are still fighting for their liberation and facing bullets for the very right of democracy for which this war was fought.

The French, he said, who were the most violent critics of Nazis for their anti-democratic principles were now denying the same democratic rights to the people in Indo-China.

INDIAN QUESTION

In India too the situation was the same. There was nothing to enthuse them. The Labour Party had done nothing to implement the promises which their leaders had made before coming into power. He thought that there was no difference between the Labour and Conservative Parties on the Indian question and a search for an indication of goodwill towards India had proved fruitless.

Maulana Azad made it clear that for the present the Congress had decided to contest the election. What they should do after the elections would be determined by the leaders after mature deliberations. They must have full confidence in their leaders who will take note of the 'awakening among the people when taking decision for the next step. In the meantime the people must not yield to passions and drift away aimlessly like a wooden plank in the stream.

Maulana Azad's speech this evening at Mirzapur, 56 miles away from Allahabad, was his first utterance in the United Provinces after his release from jail. An audience of 15,000 people including several thousand Muslims and 500

cember 3, 1945

500 ~~MAHILAS~~ women heard the Congress President in pin drop silence. Maulana Azad who appeared still weak began his 15 minutes speech with an appreciation of the consideration which the people of Mirzapur had shown him by refraining from visits to Vindiyachal where he had come for reasons of health thus giving him ample opportunity to take rest.

WELCOME ADDRESSES

A number of welcome addresses, a nicely embroidered carpet (Mirzapur is famous for carpet manufacturing industry), clay model of Maulana Azad and a number of purses for Congress work and I.N.A. Fund were presented to Maulana Azad. A composite photograph bearing the pictures of Subhas Chandra Bose, the three I.N.A. officers under trial at Delhi and Captain Lakshmi was auctioned by Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai fetching Rs.750 the amount to be credited to the I.N.A.Fund. The donor handed over the photograph to Maulana Azad who returned it to the Mirzapur Congress Committee. - (A.P.)

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Tuesday,
December 4, 1945.

CONGRESS STAND REITERATED

SELF-DETERMINATION ISSUE

Maulana Azad Explains Sardar Patel's Bombay Address

LUCKNOW, Dec. 1 :- "It is wrong to suggest that Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhai Patel have ever said that those who stood for the principle of self-determination have no place in Congress." says Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in a letter to Mr. Abdur Rauf, President of the local Nationalist Muslim Students' Federation.

"What Sardar Patel said at Bombay at the recent meeting of the All India Congress Committee", says the Maulana, "was only a retort to Mian Iftikharuddin that the latter had no place in Congress, when Mian Iftikharuddin suggested that the Muslim League had become to Musslamans what Congress was to the Hindus, the ^treport was, however, inopportune."

Maulana Azad adds that he had explained at the end of the debate that the Congress attitude towards the principle of self-determination was not affected by a settlement or otherwise with the League.

The rejection of Mian Iftikharuddin's resolution which called for acceptance of the Muslim League's demands, was not inconsistent with his own stand regarding the question of self-determination as enunciated in his statement issued at Srinagar.

Concluding, the Congress President says that it was untrue to suggest that Congress had adopted any Hindu Mahasabhaite as its candidate during the recent election to the Central Assembly. - (A.P.)

Wednesday,
September 12, 1945

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STUDENTS NOT TO BLAME

Maulana Azad Condemns Calcutta Police Firings

CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS EXPLAINED

Faith In Non-Violence Reiterated To Remove Confusion
In Public Mind

Immediately after the conclusion of the Congress Working Committee meeting the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad explained at a Press Conference the various resolutions passed by the Working Committee during its present session.

The Congress President said that the resolution on ~~non-violence~~ ^{non-violence} was the most important of the resolutions passed in Calcutta during the last four or five days.

"I emphasise", said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, "The resolution is the most important one, because ever since the August 1942 struggle, people have begun to believe that the Congress creed of non-violence no longer binds the country in general and Congressmen in particular. There has been a growing feeling ~~among~~ among people that it is not necessary to strictly adhere to the principle of non-violence in our struggle for political freedom. This is absolutely wrong. It is for the purpose of removing this confusion and misconception in public mind that the Working Committee has thought it necessary to re-affirm the Congress creed of non-violence ^{once} ~~on~~ again. We have reiterated our faith in non-violence as the only means to achieve our political objective with all the strength possible.

INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

The resolution on the Indian National Army is a natural corollary to our re-affirmation of non-violence. Our support and sympathy to the members of the Indian National Army is not to be construed to mean that the Congress has in any way deviated from its policy of attaining 'Purna Swaraj' by all peaceful, legitimate and non-violent means."

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

September 12, 1945

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CALCUTTA FIRING

Explaining the resolution on the Calcutta firing the Congress President said that while he was at Vindhyachal from Press reports he believed that the student demonstrators at Calcutta had disobeyed their leaders' request to disperse and therefore he thought they were wrong in doing so. On his return to Calcutta, however, he made detailed enquiries about the happenings and he was convinced that the attitude of the students on the first day of the trouble was quite reasonable and not condemnable. If the students had been properly tackled by responsible leaders on ^{the} ~~this~~ spot in time, all evidence ~~want~~ to show they would have obeyed their leaders but it appeared that the leaders did not reach the spot in time. "I have no doubt", said the Congress President, "the attitude of the students was quite correct and they would have listened to the advice of their leaders."

"The action of the police cannot be justified in any circumstances. As to mob-violence, I ~~must~~ say it was ~~XXXXX~~ the result of the excitement caused by the first day's firing. Mob-violence has to be condemned but it could have been avoided if the police had behaved differently. As I said it was the aftermath of the excitement caused by the firing on the first day. The burning of military lorries and stoning of police are condemnable but all these would have been avoided if the police had acted with greater wisdom and tolerance."

MADRAS DISPUTE

Answering a question Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that Mr. Asaf Ali had been deputed by the Working Committee with full powers to go to Madras to look into the representation made by some Congressmen from Tamil-Nad. Mr. Asaf Ali would try to see that Madras Provincial Congress Parliamentary Board was formed to represent various shades of opinion within the Congress in South India and thus avoid a split. "The dispute in Madras" said Maulana Azad "is among other things concerning the Provincial Assembly elections

Wednesday,
December 12, 1945

ant the question as to whether Mr. Rajagopalachari should be included or not in the Provincial Parliamentary Board."

PLENARY SESSION

The Congress President officially announced that the next plenary session of the Indian National Congress would be held at Delhi in the first week of April. He said that a detailed announcement about the programme for enrolment of primary Congress members, elections to District and Provincial Congress Committees, nomination of the new President of the Congress, election of the President and the dates for the meeting of the Working Committee, the All-India Congress Committee and the plenary session, would be made by the General Secretary from Allahabad as soon as these are fixed.

The Congress President further explained that normally it was the Punjab's right to have the Congress session but owing to the abnormal conditions and because of certain practical difficulties, the Working Committee had decided on Delhi. Asked if the Congress session at Delhi would be on the usual spectacular scale or be a purely businesslike deliberative body disposing of important business, the Congress President said that he and some members of the Working Committee had pleaded for a businesslike session, dropping all demonstrative aspects attached to the usual Congress sessions but the majority of members felt that it would not be right to do so. The Working Committee had, therefore, left the matter in the hands of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee to decide the size and dimensions of the session, consistent, of course, with the availability of materials, provisions for feeding people etc. ^{while} ~~while~~ the spectacular part of the Congress session would not completely be abandoned, the Congress President felt in the existing conditions, the demonstrative part of the Congress session would be limited to the minimum requirements.

Wednesday,
December 12, 1945

The Congress President wished to explain to ~~REXXXXXX~~ Provincial Congress Committee which had made representations to him and the Working Committee for the postponement of the plenary session of the Congress till after the provincial elections, that it was not feasible to do so and therefore though the time before them was limited for enrolment of members, the last date being December 15, for conducting elections to the District and Provincial Congress Committees and conducting the election of the President, they should manage to adjust things in such a manner as not to delay things. He, therefore, appealed to all concerned to go ahead with the plans for holding the plenary session and assist him and the Working Committee to get through the time table of the annual session.

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Monday,
December 31, 1945

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THREATENED RAILWAY STRIKE

MAULANA AZAD'S STATEMENT

Board Urged To Agree To Federation's Just Demands

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, has issued the following :

"There is to-day a widespread talk of a railway strike on an All-India scale. Such strike would be a very serious matter and affect not only the Railway Board and Railway employees, but also the public at large. In fact the social economic and political life of the country would be brought to a standstill by such strike. It is, therefore, the duty of all concerned to explore every possible method of negotiation and arbitration before the final and irrevocable step is taken.

"The All-India Railwaymen's Federation has placed before the Railway Board and the Government of India three demands regarding the suspension of retrenchment, grant of a living wage to all employees in inferior and subordinate grades, and the payment of an adequate compensatory dearness allowance till the fixation of such scales.

"The All-India Railwaymen's Federation has ~~declared~~ declared its readiness to face an adjudicator or a Court of Enquiry, if the Board considers its demands excessive or unjustified. The Board is prepared neither to accept the demands of the Federation nor to refer them to a Court. I hope that the Railway will modify its attitude before it is too late and agree to settle ^{the} ~~for~~ question at issue by method of conciliation and negotiation."

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Monday, Jan. 14, 1946.

MAULANA AZAD SHOCKED

Strong Condemnation of Chittagong Outrage.

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has issued the following statement about the incidents that occurred in Sathazari village, near Chittagong town, when a large number of members of a Civil Pioneer Corps Unit attacked the village and committed certain atrocities.

"On my arrival at Calcutta I was shocked to hear of the incidents that occurred in Sathazari village just in the out-skirts of Chittagong at a distance of only one mile from the police station Panchalaish. I was waiting for further details, and now I have received them. I cannot refrain from giving expression to my sense of indignation for what has happened. It seems almost unbelievable that members of a Civil Pioneer Corps can in broad daylight attack peaceful citizens, burn whole village outright and commit other atrocities with impunity, but unfortunately it has already happened. The Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee has been deputed to visit the place of occurrence, and has already left. It now remains to be seen what action the Government will take to punish the culprits and to make amends to the affected people for their suffering, loss and indignity. I do express my deep sympathy with the people ~~for their suffering~~ of the locality, and assure them that the Congress will take every possible step to redress their grievances, and see that justice is done."

Monday, Jan. 28, 1946.

'FREEDOM COMING VERY SOON'

NEED FOR UNITY &
DISCIPLINE

Maulana Azad & Sardar Patel's Advice At Delhi
Independence Day Meeting.

NEW DELHI, Jan. 26.

The need for unity and discipline for securing the freedom of India was stressed by both Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President and Sardar Vallabhai Patel at the Independence Day celebration in Delhi this evening. The Independence pledge was read out by the Congress President and was repeated by thousands of people who gathered at the Ramlila grounds. Earlier Sardar Patel unfurled the Tri-colour Flag. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Asaf Ali and members of the Congress Party in the Assembly were present.

Before reciting the Pledge Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that India today was awake after a long slumber for over a century and half.

The difference between a subject nation and a free country was as between a corpse and a living man. India that had just awoke was looking for the place in the comity of free nationality. There was a seat for India and it was now left for India to proceed and occupy it.

Today, January 26, Maulana Azad said people from Kashmir to Cape Comorin would have congregated and taken the Independence Pledge. They in Delhi were adding to the voice of freedom raised everywhere. The country had marched very near its goal. There was a time when they could only point their fingers at the distant goal of freedom but now they had traversed long and freedom was nearby which might fall in their lap any moment. It ~~was~~ ~~may~~ ~~x~~ was not a matter of years or even months. Freedom was coming and coming very soon. The nearness of freedom had imposed heavy responsibilities on the people. Never was unity and discipline more required than now. People must be prepared to demonstrate their strength ~~at~~ the proper time in an organised

Monday, Jan. 28, 1946.

manner. Otherwise freedom which promised to be a reality soon,
might be lost. ... (A.P.)

Wednesday, February, 6, 1946.

CONGRESS OFFER TO SOLVE SIND CRISIS; ALL-PARTY CABINET

Parity Between League & Coalition

KARACHI, Feb. 5.

Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad made an offer today that the Congress is prepared to form an All-Party Government in Sind on the basis of parity between the Muslim League and the Sind Coalition Party of which Mr. G. M. Syed is the leader.

Maulana Azad, addressing a Press conference this morning said that the Congress would welcome the formation of an All-Party Government in Sind purely on provincial basis.

He said that he and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel came to Karachi to advise the Congress Assembly Party in regard to the formation of the Assembly Coalition Party. After they studied the situation, they found it necessary that the Congress should coalesce with the groups of Mr. G. M. Syed and Haji Moulabux,

Maulana Azad maintained that the Congress Assembly Party would henceforward have no separate place in the Sind Assembly. The Coalition Party presently consisted of 30 members and were in a position to form ministry. But, added the Congress President, the peculiar conditions in Sind demanded the establishment of stable and strong ministry. This was only possible with the formation of an All-Party Government. If the Muslim League were prepared to cooperate in this respect, he would welcome the formation of an All-Party Ministry on the basis of parity between the Muslim League and the Coalition Party in the Assembly. He would suggest a cabinet of 8 ministers 4 of whom would belong to the Muslim League party. But details of the strength and ratio of representation between respective communities could be worked out once the principle was accepted.

The leader of such all-party combination should be selected by members of all the parties. As regards programme of work Maulana Azad maintained that none could take exception to the parliamentary programme contained in the Congress election

Wednesday, February 6, 1946.

manifesto and actually there was no difference of opinion on that account between the political parties. That programme could however, be adapted to suit the peculiar conditions of Sind.

ALL INDIA POLICY UNAFFECTED

The Congress President made it plain that the offer had no implication on the all India policy of the Congress. The conditions in each province differed from those prevailing in others and the Congress should deal with the situation to meet the demands of peculiar conditions in those provinces. Maulana Azad said that a spokesman of the Sind Muslim League met him yesterday and during the discussions Maulana Azad made ~~this~~ the suggestion about the formation of an All-Party Government, he would have stayed on in Karachi if there was an indication that it would be possible. Nevertheless the proposal was there and the members ~~who~~ could if possible work ~~it~~ it up.

Questioned about the basis on which the Congress could reassume administration in provinces, Maulana Azad explained that the Congress Ministries resigned from office on the question of the war issue and that issue was not now in existence. They would, therefore, resume office on the old basis. There was no need, he added, to get assurances once again about Governor's responsibilities and the interference in day-to-day administration as the assurances already given held good. Moreover, the Congress would not tolerate any interference from Governors in the sphere of ministerial responsibility and if there were instances of interference they would at once quit their offices.

The Congress President said that the nation had reached a stage where it was not necessary for the Provincial Assemblies to pass such resolutions as 'Quit India' resolution. The nearness of freedom was as clearly visible as bright day light.

In reply to a question whether he anticipated any fresh move from the British Government in regard to the solution

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of Indian constitutional problems, Maulana said : "Wait for two or three months, you will then know about it."

Maulana Azad said that he was still in correspondence with the Viceroy in regard to the release of political prisoners.

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DAYS OF INDIA'S BONDAGE OVER

AZAD'S ASSERTION : ADVICE TO CONGRESSMEN
TO PREPARE FOR COMING CRUCIAL PERIOD

KARACHI, Feb. 4.

'In the present world situation, not only Britain but even the combination of the world powers cannot keep India in bondage any more', said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, addressing a Congress workers rally this evening.

Maulana Azad added: "In the political life of a country there are different stages at different times and the nations should take different steps to suit the needs of the day. India has been fighting for the freedom of the country for a number of years. There was a stage when speeches, slogans and meetings, were necessary. The stage had now reached when the nation should make use of its intellect.

We have now to fight with our own brains. Our intellect should be of a high order so that success may be ensured. ~~When~~ When we say that freedom is knocking at our doors, it does not imply that the attitude of Britain has changed. No imperialist country can change its policy of domination and exploitation, but really the world situation has changed.'

Maulana Azad felt that the next few months would represent a crucial stage in the nation's life and India would soon be free.

For the fight, he said, two things were necessary unity and discipline. Different groups within the ranks of the Congress therefore should disappear. Unity was necessary even before but it was indispensable at the present moment. When the final stage was being reached, the nation should remain as one block. It was equally necessary that a greater sense of discipline should be attained. Indiscipline and disunity now would cause the ruination of the labours of 60 years of the Congress.

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Maulana Azad said that in Sind the foremost work of the Congressmen should be to attract Mussalmans into the Congress. So long as it was not done, the job of the Congress would remain incomplete. It was very necessary for Congress workers in Sind today to win the 'hearts of the Mussalmans'. It was complained that Mussalmans were suspicious of Congress workers when they approached them for serving them. Maulana Azad str-ongly refuted the suggestion and Congress workers should leave the city and go out to the rural areas in a spirit of service carrying the message of the Congress that it was the organisation of the people and not of a community. He was sure that if workers approached the question in that spirit the fate of the province would change and a new life in the chapter of Hindu-Muslim unity would be opened.

Sardar Patel endorsing (A.P.)

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SOLVING SIND
TANGLE

Azad Confident of Coalition
Party's Success.

"We have suggested the formation of an All-Party Ministry in Sind with a view to implementing the provisions of the Congress Election Manifesto for the general well-being of that Province. It is now up to the League to accept or reject that offer. If the League chooses not to join a composite ministry, the Congress Coalition Party in Sind will proceed to form the ministry there."

This opinion was expressed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in the course of his talks with the United Press representative immediately after the Congress President's arrival in Calcutta from Delhi by air on Wednesday noon.

On Maulana Azad's attention being drawn to the latest report from Karachi about the failure of Congress-League talks because of League insistence on the exclusion of Nationalist Muslims. Maulana Saheb replied that he would not be surprised if it was so, because the proposal for the formation of an All-Party Ministry there was a suggestion from the Congress side.

Discussing the relative strength of parties in the Sind assembly, Maulana Azad said that out of a total of 60, Congress coalition claimed 30 members, and of the rest, three Europeans were neutral. Therefore, in the case of a breakdown of talks, the Coalition could, in his opinion, very well constitute a Ministry.

Maulana Azad is leaving for Assam on Thursday. On being asked about the Parliamentary position there, he informed the United Press that he had instructed Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi to accept the Premiership and leave the question of the personnel of the Cabinet to be decided by Maulana Azad on arrival at Shillong.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, arrived in Calcutta on Wednesday by air from Delhi.

The Congress President leaves to-day for Shilling in connection with the formation of Congress Ministry in that province. His further programme has not yet been settled.

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FIGHT AGAINST FOOD CRISIS

Maulana Azad On Primary Duty of Congress
Ministries.

"The first and foremost duty of Congress Ministries would be to endeavour to ease the food situation in the country," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, to the United Press representative while boarding the Assam Mail on Thursday afternoon for his trip to Shillong.

"It was shocking that in an agricultural country like India there should be such frequent recurrences of food shortage", added Maulana Azad who expressed great concern over press reports about famine conditions in several areas in Bombay, Madras and Rajputana besides Bengal.

Continuing the Congress President informed the United Press that the food situation and the parliamentary position in different provinces would figure prominently before the next meeting of the Congress Working Committee which was going to be held in the first week of March.

REFERENCE TO SIND AFFAIRS

....Interviewed by the Associated Press of India regarding the reported possibility of the European Group supporting the formation of a League Ministry in Sind, Maulana Azad said that he would not be surprised if such a thing happened and in that case the Congress would form the Opposition. The Congress, which could simultaneously give up offices in eight provinces immediately following the outbreak of the war, was always prepared for such eventualities.

VISIT TO CONGRESS EXHIBITION

On his way to Sealdah Station to catch the train for Shillong, Maulana Azad paid a brief visit to the Congress exhibition at Sradhananada Park where he was shown round by Mr. Surendra Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, Messrs. Amarkrishna Ghose, President, N.C.D.C.C., Bhupati Mazumdar and Mrs. Labanya Prava Dutt.

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Expressing his opinion on the utility of such an exhibition, the Maulana Saheb said that from the point of view of mass education it was of great national importance and it should be held from time to time.

The Congress President placed a floral wreath on the martyrs memorial in the exhibition amidst shouts of Jail Hind.

It is understood the Congress President expressed satisfaction on seeing the exhibition and desired that steps should be taken to prepare slides of the pictures, train workers and carry on lantern lectures throughout the province.

Wednesday, February 13, 1946.

AZAD'S CALL FOR IMMEDIATE PEACE

Incidents in Calcutta Deplored : Leaders' Appeal
To Citizens

Regretting the incidents that are taking place in Calcutta for the last two days, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, appeals to all the citizens to try their best to stop the spread of hooliganism in the city.

Maulana Azad, who returned from Shillong yesterday afternoon in a statement issued to the Associated Press of India on the same day, says :-

"On my arrival here at 2 P.M. from Shillong I was extremely shocked to hear of the incidents taking place in Calcutta for the last two days. I am making an enquiry and shall probably be able to give a detailed statement shortly. But it is obvious from the reports that the bad characters of the city are inflaming sentiments of young men and utilising the situation for their nefarious ends. I would appeal to all the citizens to try to stop the spread of hooliganism. Those who are engaged in holding up traffic, damaging military vans and other wanton acts are doing a great disservice to the best interests of the country. It is the duty of every Congress worker of the city to stand up for the preservation of peace and order".

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COALITION WITH
LEAGUE

ASSAM CABINET

Maulana Azad Explains
Conditions.

(From Our Shilling Office.)

MONDAY, Feb. 11.

"The Bardoloi Ministry which has taken over will be strong and stable", said Rastrapati Maulana Azad when interviewed by the "Patrika" representative.

The Congress President said that in the general election of 1936/37 many groups were found in the Assam Assembly. But in this election one good result was that those small groups had vanished and the Congress Party had come back with a solid group of 58 members. Three Muslim members who had been returned on the All-India Muslim Parliamentary Board ticket would also work with the Congress group. In this way this group would have 61 members. Therefore the Ministry which was now taking over would be strong and stable. Out of nine Ministers, three had been reserved for the Muslims. One of this was being filled by the immediate inclusion of Maulvi Abdul Muttlib Mazumdar. Two other places had not at present been filled.

When he reached Shillong on the 8th, said the Congress President, an old acquaintance approached him and asked whether it was possible to extend the same offer of coalition to the Assam League Party as was done in the case of Sind. Maulana Azad told him that the case of Sind was on a different footing from that of Assam, nevertheless as far as the Congress was concerned there would be no objection to form a coalition with the League provided it was based on a common programme of work. Maulana Azad told him further that if Sir Muhammad Saadullah, the leader of the Assam Muslim League, was willing to have a discussion in this connection, he would be pleased to see him. Accordingly they met the same evening and had a discussion. Maulana Azad told Sir Muhammad that if the Muslim League Party

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of Assam would accept the Congress Parliamentary programme, as had been elaborated in its Election Manifesto as the basis of coalition, there would be no difficulty in forming a ~~composite~~ composite ministry. Sir Muhammad expressed his inability to give his reply immediately and wanted time to get into touch with the League Parliamentary Board for a direction in the matter. Therefore it was decided that the formation of the ministry would be postponed till the following evening.-

ADVICE TO BARDOLOI

Next evening Sir Muhammad sent a letter stating that till then he had not been able to come to any decision and it would be better that the formation of the ministry should no longer be delayed. Accordingly Maulana Azad advised Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi to submit to the Governor a list of seven members of the Cabinet leaving out two seats for Muslims. Maulana Azad felt that the League Party had not had sufficient time to consider ^{and} ~~the~~ decide the matter and therefore it was desirable that they should wait for sometime regarding the selection of two more Muslim ministers. He was to-day leaving for Calcutta but he would keep the offer open. As soon as the League Party was able to come to a decision Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, the Premier, would take the necessary steps in this matter.

Regarding the composition of the Cabinet Maulana Azad said that as far as possible consideration had been given to different interests. But the basis in coming to a decision was the efficiency and ability of the persons selected. In this province among backward people were tribes of hills and plains. The Congress was alive to the interests of the backward people. This was evident from the fact that two members belonging to the plains and tribals were given nomination for seats reserved for general constituencies. In considering the personnel of the Cabinet the case of those returned from plains and tribes were also given consideration but it was not found possible to include them just at present. Nevertheless the Congress President wished to assure them that their interests would be properly safeguarded. The door for their inclusion in

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the Cabinet would also remain open and whenever any qualified person was available he would be taken in.

Maulana Azad left to-day for Calcutta.

Thursday, Feb. 14, 1946.

ILL-WILL AGAINST
CIVILIAN NEPALESE

Maulana Azad's Appeal To People

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has issued the following statement:

I am grieved to learn that some people are harbouring feelings of ill-will against the civilian Nepalese who reside in various parts of the city. They think that the actions of the Gurkha military should be avenged on all the Nepalese. If it is true, it is very regrettable. I would appeal to all the citizens not to give way to such evil feelings and they should try to bring it home to mothers also.

The Gurkhas employed in the army have no grudge against Indians. When they carry out orders of their officers, they do so because they have been trained to follow the military discipline as a soldier, and they have no capacity to understand anything further. It would be criminal to hold all the Nepalese responsible for it and to avenge on them.

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ATTACK ON CHURCH CONDEMNED

CALCUTTA DISTURBANCES

Azad On Govt. Responsibility : Advice To
Students To Be More Disciplined

In a statement on the Calcutta disturbances, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President says that the Government must bear a large share of responsibility for whatever has happened. At the same time students and young men must act with a greater sense of responsibility if they are to serve the cause of Indian freedom. Perhaps the worst incident of all in the disturbances was the attack on the Methodist Church in Dharamtala Street.

The following is the text of the Congress President's statement:-

"I have refrained from any comment on the regrettable incidents of the last few days while passions ran high and my words might be torn out of their context to contribute to the excitement. Now, however, the city is returning to normalcy, and I feel it is my duty to place my views clearly before the public. The first thing I want to state is that the Government must bear a large share of responsibility for whatever has happened.

The attempt to reserve some parts of the city as a special and sacrosanct area of the bureaucracy is indefensible and the citizens of Calcutta are not prepared to tolerate it any more.

If the processionists had been allowed to go through Dalhousie Square, nothing would have happened beyond the shouting of a few slogans. The blocking of the procession on the other hand led to the loss of 47 lives, injury to many hundreds, destruction and damage of property and creation of uncontrolled bitterness and hatred. The futility of Government policy was proved once in November last when the police attempted to block a procession from going to Dalhousie Square, and it has proved tragically once again in the incidents of the last few days.

I left for Shillong on the 7th instant. I am told that the Communists were trying to stage a demonstration over the release of Captain A. Rashid of the I.N.A. from the 9th, and a section of Muslim students who owe allegiance to the Muslim League joined forces with them. Helped by the Communist Party, they took out a demon

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demonstration on Monday in support of the demand for the release of Captain A. Rashid. Obstruction to this procession near Dalhousie Square led to the tragic developments.

INTERVENTION OF MILITARY

On my return from Shillong on Tuesday, I found that the situation had already assumed serious proportions, but from reports from responsible leaders I was led to believe that things were beginning to settle down and would perhaps have quietened down by Wednesday night, but for the intervention of the military. This added provocation led to further excitement and Wednesday and Thursday saw some of the wildest and most regrettable exhibitions of mob fury. I am convinced that if the Government had contacted ~~responsibili~~ responsible leaders of public opinion and acted in concert with them, the situation could have been brought under control.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY

I have at the same time to point out that the students and young men must act with a greater sense of responsibility if they are to serve the cause of Indian freedom. Our struggle for independence has reached a state when sporadic and isolated action of individuals and groups serve as a hinderance rather than help.

Those who are soldiers of freedom must obey their leaders, for an army in which everyone issues commands ceases to be an army and becomes a rabble.

Those Muslim students who owe allegiance to the League should have taken directions from the Provincial League Committee and its responsible leaders instead of confronting them with an accomplished fact. I am sure that if they had approached the League leadership, they would have weighed the pros and cons of each decision, and if they had decided to call a 'hartal' they would have taken steps to see that the League behaved in a controlled and disciplined manner.

I understand that the President of the B.P.C.C. was approached for calling a general strike of the whole city, but in view of the conditions prevailing and the great hardships of the public he

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refused to call for such 'hartal'.

He also had in mind the situation that would arise as a result of such 'hartal', which would bring on the streets number of men without any occupation during a troubled and critical time. Any how the 'hartal' was held, and this in my opinion was a grave mistake.

SEQUEL TO 'HARTAL'

Some of the things that the President of the B.P.C.C. had foreseen came to pass. Wednesday saw attacks on military vehicles, on private cars, rickshaws, on individual Europeans and Anglo-Indians and on a convoy of American home-bound troops on the Barrackpore Road. These are incidents which every sensible and responsible public man regrets and condemns, but perhaps the worst incident of all was the attack on the Methodist Church in Dharamtalla Street. I do not know who were responsible for this attack, but it must be clear to all who have the welfare of India at heart that we cannot tolerate an attack on the places of worship of any community, however small.

DAMAGE TO METHODIST CHURCH

I have had continuous fever since my return from Shillong, but even then I could not refrain from going to the Methodist Church on February 16 and seeing for myself the ravages of the miscreants. Rev. Atkinson, the Minister, was kind enough to show me round and I requested him that he should place before the next meeting of the Church Committee my proposal that the damage must be made good by the contributions raised by the citizens of Calcutta. This would, in my opinion, serve as a proof that in the India of the future, the places of worship of every community would be sacred to members of every other community. I am directing the local Congress Committees to raise the necessary funds, and to come to touch with the Methodist Church Society.

AZAD VISITS METHODIST CHURCH

Maulana Azad, Congress President visited on Saturday the

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Methodist Church in Dharamtollah which was burnt by the hooligans during the last Calcutta disturbances. Rev. Atkinson took the Congress President round the Church and showed the damage done.

Maulana Sahib expressed sorrow at the damage done to a place of worship and said that he was ashamed of the hooligans who had done so.

Maulana Sahib requested the Church Committee to accept his offer to compensate the loss done to the Church by contributions of the citizens of Calcutta which the Congress will undertake to collect.

Rev. Atkinson expressed his gratitude to the Maulana.

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 1946.

AZAD'S WARNING TO BRITAIN

STRUGGLE IF PLEDGE DISHONoured

Countrymen Asked to Wait Till Signal To Strike

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in a statement says that if the British Government fail to honour the September 1945 declaration in letter and in spirit, the Congress will consider the necessary steps for a final and decisive struggle. The Congress decision to wait and watch should not be construed as unwillingness to fight.

He adds that so long as the Congress decides to wait on events, no attempt should be made to disturb the peaceful atmosphere or create sporadic and disjointed movements.

When the time comes the Congress will give the call for struggle and will expect every Indian to respond to the call. He particularly appeals to the youth of India to realise the wisdom of Congress policy and obey it as disciplined soldiers.

The following is the text of Maulana Azad's statement :-

"I am frequently asked about the present policy and future programme of the Congress and consider it my duty to state it as clearly and as unambiguously as I can. The only problem before India is the immediate realisation of the country's independence. The British Government has made a declaration in September, 1945. The Congress does not consider it satisfactory~~xxx~~, but nevertheless, after considering all aspects of the situation has decided to take the declaration at its face value. It has accordingly decided to participate in the elections and form Governments in the provinces. It will wait for the result of the provincial elections and watch what steps the British Government thereafter take. If the British Government then make an unequivocal declaration of India's independence, form a ~~provincial~~ provisional national Government in the Centre as an interim measure, and convene a ~~constitution~~ constituent assembly to frame the future constitution of free India, well and good. The Congress will welcome such solution of the Indo-British problem through peaceful means. It would be

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 1946.

futile to look for precedents in history. The world has changed beyond recognition and a new chapter of human history is in the making. We are living on the threshold of a new world, and I believe that in the changed circumstances of to-day, such a peaceful solution is not beyond the range of possibility.

THE ALTERNATIVE

The alternative is also clearly realised by the Congress. If the British Government fail to honour the September declaration in letter and in spirit, the Congress will consider the necessary steps for a final and decisive struggle. Let there be no misunderstanding on the point. The Congress decision to wait and watch should not be construed as unwillingness to fight. When the situation demands, the Congress will issue the call and demand from India the utmost sacrifice for realising its goal of Indian freedom.

One other point must also be stated. If there are any individuals or groups who want to impose a movement on the Congress at a time not chosen by it, I want to tell them with all the emphasis at my command that the Congress will repudiate all such attempts.

The Congress leadership has weathered many storms and proved its capacity both for sacrifice and decision. They know when to negotiate, and they also know when to strike.

To-day, the issue has become simplified and concentrated to the one supreme question of immediate realisation of independence. If that is gained all other objectives are automatically realised. There is an Arabic saying : "If you have got hold of the stem, you need not bother for the branches". In such context, no other question, however pressing or acute, should be allowed to distract our attention or divide our energies. So long as the Congress decides to wait on events, no attempt should be made to disturb the peaceful atmosphere or create sporadic and disjointed movements. When the time comes, the Congress will give the call for struggle and will expect every Indian to respond to the call. I particularly appeal to the youth of India, who are the vanguard of our freedom movement to realise the wisdom of Congress policy and obey it as disciplined soldiers.

Thursday, February 21, 1946.

WHY NO ASSURANCE
FROM GOVERNORS

Azad Explains Congress Stand
On Interference Issue

The Congress attitude towards any possible interference from Governors in provinces where Congress Ministries are being formed was explained by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President in a Statement to the "Associated Press".

Maulana Azad said: "Now that a Congress Ministry has taken office in Assam, and will soon do so in other provinces, I have been asked by many why Congress has not asked for any assurance of non-interference from Governors.

1946 IS NOT 1937.

Those who ask for such questions remember that such assurances were demanded and obtained in 1937, but they do not remember that 1946 is not 1937.

The intervening years have been revolutionary changes all over the world, and nowhere have the changes been more revolutionary than in India. In 1937 it was necessary to ask for assurances, and even then Congress Ministers had to threaten resignations over the question of release of political prisoners. Now that it is a settled fact that power is to be transferred to the Indian people, the Congress has decided to accept office in provinces and wait for the formation of a Provisional Government at the Centre.

To ask for assurances in such a context is to undermine the position already achieved. If there are any differences between Ministers and the Governor, it will be the Governor and not the Ministers who will have to resign.

AZAD GLAD CRIPPS IS COMING

Interviewed by the Associated Press of India, the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said that the proposed visit to India of the British Cabinet Delegation was a wise decision which would be appreciated by the country.

Thursday, February 21, 1946.

Maulana Azad, who was aware of the proposal since last month, was specially pleased to learn that Sir Stafford Cripps would be a member of the Delegation. Whatever be the judgment on the shortcomings of the Cripps' offer, the Congress President had no doubt about the sincerity of purpose of Sir Stafford Cripps. He believed that Sir Stafford's presence would be helpful to India's case and he would be happy to meet him again after an interval of three years.

REPAIR OF CHURCH

Azad's Move For Collection of Funds.

Suggesting that contributions for repairing the damage caused to the Methodist Church in the recent Calcutta disturbances should come from a wide circle, the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a statement issued through the Associated Press of India says :

"Some friends have offered to make good the damage to the Methodist Church by their personal contributions. I appreciate their intention, and thank them for it, but I am of the opinion that the cost of repairs should not be borne by a few individuals or parties. I think that contributions should come from a wide circle and if possible the necessary money should be collected by 'anna' or even 'pie' contributions from many. This would bring home to everybody that places of worship of every community should be sacred to all irrespective of religious differences."

AZAD TO FLY TO PESHAWAR
PESHAWAR, Feb. 20.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, who is reported to be arriving in Peshawar on February 24, by air, will, it is learnt from Congress circles, attend a meeting of the newly formed Congress Parliamentary Party on the same day. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Ali Gul Khan, President of Frontier Congress will also be present.- (U.P.)

Tuesday, February 26, 1946.

MAULANA AZAD DISCUSSES FOOD SITUATION
WITH VICEROY

NEW DELHI, Feb. 25.

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had an hour's interview with the Viceroy this afternoon. Mr. Asaf Ali, Deputy Leader of the Congress Party, accompanied the Congress President.

Maulana Azad returned from Peshawar this afternoon and from the airport drove straight to the Viceroy's house for the interview.

"We discussed the food situation and also the general political situation" said Maulana Azad interviewed by an Associated Press of India reporter. He did not know if he would be seeing the Viceroy again in the immediate future but said that his discussion was not yet over and that he would be writing to the Viceroy.

That there had been correspondence between him and the Viceroy on the food problem, was revealed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President in an interview to the United Press of India. The Maulana had given the Viceroy his suggestions and the Viceroy also written to the Congress President giving him a grim picture of the food situation and his suggestion for a solution of the problem.

Asked if the Congress would co-operate with the government in solving the food problem, Maulana Azad said "It is not mere a question of Congress co-operation. The real need is creation of faith in people's mind. If they realise everything possible is being done to alleviate their misery, people would be ready to suffer and there would be no panic.-(A.P. & U.P.)"

Wednesday, February 27, 1946.

AZAD APPEALS NOT TO
ACCENTUATE SITUATION

R.I.N. STRIKE EPISODE

Selection of Ring-leaders For
Punishment Not just

NEW DELHI, Feb. 26.

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to-day on the recent happenings in the R.I.N. said that it was true that discipline in the army was a matter of supreme importance, but, having regard to the entire of happenings in connection with the ratings strike, the question of discipline should not be viewed in narrow spirit. Nothing should be done, Maulana Azad said, to give the impression that individuals can be, or are responsible for collective and general feelings and actions.

Maulana Azad said : Now that the R.I.N. episode has come to a close, it is possible to view its origin and development in their proper perspective in a dispassionate manner. It is, whether the action of ratings in going on strike is called by its technical term of the naval law, viz. 'mutiny', or it is called by the civil term 'strike', the essential nature of the action resorted to by the ratings undergoes no change. It is perfectly clear that certain grievances which the ratings had been feeling for some time were not redressed for one reason or another. Certain immediate incidents brought the trouble to a head, but the root of the struggle, as far as one can judge, was the feeling of the ratings that in spite of the fact that they were in no sense inferior to those of the British Navy, they were not placed on the same footing as regards general treatment. For a hundred and fifty years or longer the Indian Services have been subject to this discriminatory treatment. Now that India has come of age, and Indians generally are keenly conscious of national dignity and self-respect, racial discrimination is very keenly felt and resented.

Wednesday, February 27, 1946.

INSULT TO SELF-RESPECT

It is quite obvious from the facts as they have been reported that Indian ratings of R.I.N. went on strike as the result of what they consider was a gratuitous insult to national self-respect. They formulated their demands in a clear and precise form. Examination of ~~ix~~ their demands shows that they were legitimate. And so far as they are legitimate they must be sympathetically examined and redressed.

The term "Ring-leaders", in such instances, said President Azad, usually applies to a person who acts as a spokesman of a general body of complainants. It would be unjust to select such persons for punishment. In the present atmosphere of the country, which is surcharged with emotion and political irritation, it is essential that nothing should be done which may accentuate the situation. I earnestly appeal to the authorities concerned who seem to be anxious to secure efficient working of the services both during the interim period and in the future to try to see things from the Indian national point of view. India is not in a mood to tolerate any action that may have even the semblance of the suppression of national spirit in any quarter. - (A.P.).

Friday, March 1, 1946.

MAULANA AZAD CONDEMNS STUDENTS' ACTION

Lahore, Feb. 28.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in an interview to the Associated Press of India, condemned the action of the students who yesterday stopped the Punjab Governor's car and tore the Union Jack.

Maulana Azad said : Every sensible man would condemn without reservation yesterday's behaviour of certain students who stopped the car of His Excellency the Governor, tore the Union Jack and broke the glass screen. The morning papers also confirm the report that the car of a European lady was stoned. Another lady who was going on ~~bi~~-cycle was molested and the neck-ties of persons were ~~snatched~~ away and burnt. Those who have done it must know that they have done the greatest possible disservice to the cause of the country."

The United Press of India understands that in course of his interview with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, yesterday, premier Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana discussed the situation arisen out of yesterday's students demonstration in Lahore which proved violent at places and requested Maulana Azad to use his restraining influence on them so that the untoward incidents that marred the peace and tranquillity in Bombay and other places may not be repeated here. - (U.P.)

Sunday, March 3, 1946.

TRANSFER OF POWER
IMMINENT

Indians Now Living Under Caretaker Govt.

AZAD APPEALS TO COUNTRYMEN
NOT TO PRECIPITATE UNREST

LAHORE, March 2.

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in a statement to the Associated Press of India defines the general attitude of the Congress on the question of tackling the food problem. "I have", he says, "discussed the food situation with the Viceroy and made certain suggestions which are under consideration".

The Congress President says: In view of the tense political situation and acute scarcity of food with which the country is threatened it is necessary that the general attitude of the Congress should be made known to all concerned beyond any doubt. India is passing through the birth-pangs of freedom on the one hand, and the ordeal of many privations or threats of privations which always form part of the aftermath of a war on the other. The urge of freedom accentuated by the past five years of war has given a poignancy to the impatience of every section of the population in India. It is a phase of human longings all the world over which has brought with it a new mental climate. None who is concerned with the rapid advance man is making towards his destiny can ignore or gloss over it without peril. The Congress is essentially a political organisation based on the will and aspirations of the people. Its leadership has, as I have said before, weathered many storms and has steered the bark of the country in close and wide contact with the people. We are fully alive to the urgency of the new spirit and to the impatience of the younger generation. But we are equally conscious of our heavy responsibilities at this critical time. The situation does not admit of over-simplified formulas of action. It is difficult and complex and demands the most careful and cautious handling. I must therefore appeal to all the parties

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in the country to exercise restraint and to allow the situation to be confined to manageable proportions.

TRANSFER OF POWER IMMINENT

Transfer of power from foreign to Indian hands and its assumption by the people who are the true repository of all powers and sovereignty is now only a matter of short time. It is therefore most essential that all should watch their steps and desist from creating situations which may lend themselves to exploitation by those who would prejudice the early realisation of India's aspirations.

"Much self-control is imperatively demanded by circumstances of the day. Strikes, hartals, and defiance of the temporary authority of the day are out of place to-day. No immediate cause has arisen to join issue with the foreign rulers who are now acting as caretakers."

In any case it is in abeyance until the refusal to transfer power and that not for a long time. When the time comes for entering the lists the Congress will not hesitate to sound the bugle call. In the meantime all energy must be reserved and all clashes should be scrupulously avoided.

On the food front which is India's immediate concern there should be willing co-operation between the temporary government of the day and the people. Strikes and demonstrations, hartals and processions should not be resorted to and the general atmosphere in the country should be allowed to remain calm and peaceful.

MUCH WORK AHEAD

"Much serious work which demands all the mental energy of the leaders lies immediately ahead. All diversions at this stage will prove detrimental to the immediate tasks ahead. None, not even the most unimaginative of our foreign rulers is in doubt of the potentialities and urgency of the situation and those who think the demonstrations are necessary to emphasise the impatience of the people are wasting their and the people's energy. Again those who believe in skirmishes

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as invigorating tonics misjudge the actual needs of the situation.

ON FOOD FRONT

I have discussed the food situation with the Viceroy and made certain suggestions which are under consideration. Alarmist rumours should be discouraged and popular committees of producers and consumers should spring up in rural areas, and dealers of foodstuffs and consumers in urban areas should set up similar committees to keep a vigilant eye on abuses which shortsighted greed dictates. The cut in rations should be regarded as a farsighted measure for saving millions of lives. There are hopeful signs of an improvement of the situation if only food is kept out of party politics." - (A.P.)

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COALITION PARTY TO FORM PUNJAB CABINET

Khizar Hyat Khan
Invited By Governor

MAULANA AZAD EXPLAINS TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT

LAHORE, Mar. 3.

It is announced from Government House that His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab granted an interview to the Hon'ble Lieut.-Colonel Malik Nawab Sir Khizar Hyat Khan, Leader of the Coalition Party and requested his assistance in forming a Ministry in the Province.

Malik Khizar Hyat Khan has accepted the invitation of His Excellency the Governor.

The Congress President Maulana Azad, announced at a press conference that the Congress, the Unionist and the Akali parties have agreed to form a coalition party to be known as the Punjab Assembly Coalition Party.

Explaining the circumstances in which the coalition had been formed, Maulana Azad said the election results are before you. The largest single party is the Muslim League, and of the minority groups the Congress is the biggest. In these circumstances, it was the duty of the largest party to start talks for the formation of a Ministry with the largest minority group but for one reason or another the Muslim League Party did not consider it necessary to do so and started negotiations instead with the Panthic Party. When their talks with the Panthic Party did not bear fruit, they thought it necessary to pay attention to the Congress, any how the Congress welcomed them and opened talks with them. The leader of Muslim League Party, Nawab of Mamdot, Sir Feroz Khan Noon and Sardar Shaukat Hyat met me and suggested the formation of a coalition between the Congress, the Akali and the Muslim League in view of the situation prevailing in the province. In this connection they also addressed a communication for Mr. Bhim Sen Sachar on March 2 and I consider their proposal. Subsequently, they were informed that the Congress will gladly accept this proposal

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provided satisfactory assurances were given to the Congress on three vital points.

3 POINTS EXPLAINED

Elucidating the three points the Congress President said: "Firstly we should know the programme of the proposed coalition, a programme on which all the three could come together. Secondly we should be satisfied how the differences between the three parties with regard to the future constitution could be isolated. On this point the Congress Party proposed that issues of an all India nature shall be beyond the purview of the proposed coalition and this coalition will only be formed for the purpose of running the provincial administration. Thirdly it was proposed that there should be parity in the cabinet between the Muslim League on one side and the Congress and the Akali Parties on the other since the numerical strength of the Congress and the Akali Parties - 51 plus 33 - was almost equal to the strength of the Muslim League - 75. I think the proposal made by the Congress Party was most reasonable but I regret to say that the Muslim League was not able to accept it. They urged that they were ready to accept all the three conditions provided the Congress gave an assurance that they would not include any Muslim in the quota allotted to them in the Cabinet. The Congress was not prepared to accept this condition."

TWO ALTERNATIVES

After this Maulana Azad continued: "Only two alternatives were left and these were that either we should accept Section 93 regime in the province or the three other parties - Congress, Unionist and Panthic Parties - should join together to devise some plan. After taking into consideration the different aspects of the case I was definitely of opinion that there would be nothing more detrimental to the interests of the province than Section 93 regime. This left only one alternative behind and the leader of the Congress Party opened negotiations for the same and now I am in a position to announce that the

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Congress, the Unionist and the Panthic parties have agreed to enter into a coalition. In this connection certain facts have already come before the public to some extent and these are about differences on certain matters. The most vital difference was with regard to the position of Sikhs on the distribution of offices. Every one knows the election results. Sikhs contested on the Congress ticket and there are ten Sikh members in the Congress Party."

Maulana Azad pointed out that the Congress in no case was prepared to tolerate a situation in which the Congress Sikhs were debarred from offices reserved for Sikhs. He said there was considerable discussion on this issue and eventually it was decided that in a Cabinet of six the seat for Sikhs should go to the Panthic Party. According to the agreement between the parties the office of Deputy Speaker, which is to be given to the Sikhs, and two Parliamentary Secretaryships shall go to the Congress Sikhs.

OFFER TO CONGRESS SIKHS

I would like to add that the Congress Party was prepared to offer to the Congress Sikhs one of the two seats in the Cabinet allotted to the Congress Party and a short while ago I invited the Sikh members of the Congress Party and placed this offer before them. They expressed their gratitude for the offer but insisted that they should not be compelled to accept it because they realise that both these offices should go to the Hindus. I whole-heartedly appreciate their sentiments and the magnanimity shown by them.

Maulana Azad pointed out that it was only a temporary arrangement and it would be necessary in the near future to expand the Cabinet and in the expanded Cabinet there would certainly be one more seat for the Sikhs.

PANTHIC PARTY POSITION

Regarding the clarification sought by the Panthic Party relating to their position in the future constitutional status of the Punjab the Congress President referred to the Lahore

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resolution of the Indian National Congress passed in 1929-30 on the subject and said that in any future constitutional position no settlement would be made without consultation with the Sikhs. The Congress had always stood by that resolution and was prepared to stand by it in future, declared the Congress President.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in conclusion appealed to the Press to help the three parties by creating a peaceful communal atmosphere in the province.

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PUNJAB SAVED FROM
SEC.93 RULE

—
AZAD HAPPY
—

League Party's Absence In
Coalition Deplored.

LAHORE, Mar, 6.

"I am happy to say that the Punjab has been saved from Section 93 Rule", said Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to an "Associated Press of America" staff correspondent at Lahore airport to-day.

"I am glad the deadlock has been averted, but I admit that the best solution would have been one in which the Muslim League would have joined in the responsibility of office.

"But the responsibility for this not happening lies with the League. I can say with certainty that there were possibilities that the Muslim League Party would accept the Congress offer if the decision had been left to the leaders in the province. But when the trunk call was made to Mr. Jinnah at Shillong, they got a refusal.

"Then there was no alternative left. Either we had to tolerate Section 93 Rule in the province or a Coalition had to be formed between Congress, Akali and Unionist parties.

"I want to make it definitely clear that so long as the League Party did not reject the Congress offer, I did not make any commitment to the Unionist or Akali Party."

Maulana Azad said he had told the leader of the Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition, Malik Khizir Hyat Khan, "The way, in which things have been going on in the Punjab for the last eight years, must come to an end. He (Malik Khizar Hyat Khan) should now work in a new world—the Congress world."

Asked what he meant that the present Ministerial Coalition was a temporary one, Congress President explained: "It is temporary in the sense that before long the Cabinet will have to be extended which has not been done now for several reasons."

A few minutes before he boarded the plane for Peshwar, Maulana Azad said : "These Ordinances (referring to all

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Ordinances now extent) must go immediately. They are patently unjust and a burden on the country. It is extremely unfair, now that the war is over, that they should continue to exist."

Referring to release of political prisoners, Maulana Azad said that in the provinces where Congress ministries were being formed the prisoners were being released. He cited Assam where every political detenu has been released.

He did not understand, he said, why Mr. Jaiprakash Narain, Congress Socialist leader, should continue to be in jail. "It is apparent that, if the Government do not release him, we will later do it", Maulana Azad added.

Congress President added that Working Committee deliberations in Bombay next week.

Maulana Azad is reaching Delhi on Friday and will leave for Bombay by air on March 11. - (A.P. of America).

Sunday March 10, 1946.

DUAL CONTROL OF
FRONTIER PROVINCE

AZAD ON ITS PECULIAR WAY

Congress Govt. To Usher In
New Era

PESHWAR, Mar. 8 (Delayed).

"A new chapter of the Frontier Congress Ministry has begun and I am turning over the first page", observed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, in course of a press interview.

The Congress President further observed that administration in this province was not entirely in the hands of the Government, the political side being controlled by the Central Government.

Besides, he added, the permanent service in the province had a peculiar way of its own, going sometimes against the policy of the Ministry. But the Congress President advised the Congress Party to shoulder the burden of Ministry in spite of all hindrances. If the officials do not co-operate, they must be forced to do so and if the services get corrupt and inefficient, the Ministry has to reform them.

Referring to the workers' conference, called by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Congress President, said that he himself suggested this in order to get an assurance from the workers that they would give their full active support, without which Ministry should not be accepted.

Asked by the United Press representative if he had discussed the Frontier problems with the Viceroy, the Congress President replied in the affirmative and added that he had detailed talks with the Viceroy and had also some correspondences with His Excellency in this matter. - (U.P.)

Tuesday, March 12, 1946.

DELHI DISTURBANCES
CONDEMNED

Azad's Call For Peace Till Cabinet
Mission Finishes Task

NEW DELHI, Mar. 11.

A strong condemnation of the recent disturbances at Delhi was made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President addressing the Congress workers at a meeting here this morning prior to his leaving for Bombay.

Maulana Azad said : "Whatever was done on that day in Delhi was wrong. Those who try to take the masses with them in such happenings are merely wasting the strength of the masses. They are doing disservice to ~~xxxxxx~~ the nation.

"In the public life of every nation comes a time when the men who lead and are not led are put on trial. Such a time has come in India. On the one hand is their conscience and on the other their fear that if they do not take certain steps other irresponsible elements will take advantage of it and carry the masses with them. I will not for one moment let that consideration weigh with me and it should not weigh with you.

"When I was going to Lahore the President of the Delhi Congress informed me of the Victory Celebrations. I at once announced that the Congress cannot take part in the celebrations but it is not prepared to stage any demonstrations. I am not unaware of the feeling of the masses in the country, but the Congress thinks that at the present moment all other problems have receded into background. The chief problem is that of India's independence".

Referring to the September declaration of the Viceroy Maulana Azad said, "The Congress has accepted it on its face value. As a result it went into the elections and in those provinces where Congress could, to form Ministries.

"The Cabinet Mission is coming to India to implement the declarations for India's independence. We must wait for it. If the British Government fulfil their pledge well and good. If they do not the Congress will prepare for the last and final

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struggle and prepare the nation for it. But until that time comes the nation's peace must be maintained.

Referring to Delhi disturbances Maulana Azad said :
"Those who burnt the Town Hall and the post offices did not cause any harm to the British Government but to the Indian nation itself".

A question was put to the Congress President whether the Congress should not tell the people what to do if the Cabinet Mission fails and the Government take steps similar to those taken by them in August 1942.

Maulana Azad replied that no leadership could divulge the steps that they proposed to take until the occasion arose.

- (U.P.)

Wednesday, March 13, 1946.

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETS
GANDHIJI PRESENT

AZAD REVIEWS POLITICAL SITUATION

EMPHASIS ON NONVIOLENCE

Concern At Attempts To Force
Hands of Congress.

BOMBAY, Mar. 12.

The Congress Working Committee met at 2 P.M. under the presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Mahatma Gandhi was also present.

Maulana Azad, the Congress President, in a brief speech reviewed the political situation in the country since the last meeting of the Working Committee in Calcutta three months ago. He conveyed to the Committee the gist of the conversations he has had with Lord Wavell during his recent two interviews with him.

He also expressed to the Committee his grave concern at the attempts made by certain elements inside and outside the Congress to force the hands of the Congress and emphasized the need for the Congress to strictly adhere to non-violence and not to be deflected from its policy of fighting the elections on the specific and clear-cut issue of the immediate transfer of power from Britain to India on the basis of the independence of India.

A general discussion then followed in which all the members present participated.....

GOAL IS VERY NEAR

... "Now I can say that our goal is very near," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President to the United Press special representative prior to his departure to the Birla House in connection with the working Committee meeting this afternoon, replying to the query by the latter, "How far was the goal of Independence."

On the United Press representative asking Maulana Azad again, 'Don't you think there are yet many more difficulties on our way to the cherished goal of independence ?' The Congress

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President gave a hearty laughter and said, "Do you think we are afraid of difficulties which may beset our path ? Difficulties can never keep us away from achieving our cherished goal."

Asked about his opinion about the recent disturbances in various parts of the country Maulana Azad characterised them as, "Outbursts of the political life of the nation," but the Congress, he said, must take necessary steps to see that such mass demonstrations proceed along peaceful lines.

The United Press representative drew Maulana Saheb's attention to Gandhiji's post-prayer speech of yesterday which seemed to be full of optimism about the hope which the British Cabinet Mission is expected to delivery and asked him whether he entertained much hope from the Cabinet Mission when the Congress President observed, "We shall keep an open mind, but I may tell you that I have been hopeful throughout my life."

A.I.C.C. MEETING

Asked about the prospect of a plenary session of the Congress this year, the Maulana Saheb said, "There would be no Congress session in near future. However I am intending to convene a meeting of the new members of the A.I.C.C. in May next. The venue of such meeting is likely to be decided by the Working Committee." - (U.P.)

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Tuesday, March 19, 1946.

WORLD EVENTS BRINGS
FREEDOM TO INDIA

Congress President Confident
of Cabinet Mission's Success.

NEW DELHI, Mar. 18.

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to Associated Press of India to-day declared that he saw no reason why a solution of the Indian problem should not be considered hopeful.

In view of the forthcoming talks and negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission the Congress President said that he would not attempt to speculate about things or anticipate the course of events. "In so far as the Congress is concerned," the Maulana said, "Our fundamentals and the main outline of our approach are already well-known. As regards details, it is obvious it all depends on developments and various adjustments which will have to be made."

The Maulana spoke with quiet confidence of the coming negotiations. In a message to the British public he said: "I find in the latest pronouncement of Mr. Attlee a new spirit and if the Mission is coming out with a determination to find a solution in that spirit I see no reason why the outcome should not be considered hopeful."

PEACEFUL TRANSITION

Speaking of India in the International context Maulana Azad said: "History does not record any example of ~~transition~~ of transition of power from one hand to another in a peaceful manner but the world has developed a new consciousness - at any rate let us hope so - and people are wide awake and conscious of their rights and the time has arrived when such transition should be the rule and not the exception. Apart from internal developments here is a higher aspect of the question of India's independence which has a significance in the present context of world events."

Whatever has taken place in the world during the past

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few years has brought about a new situation and a new Chapter of human history is being written. We stand on the threshold of a new age. Events in world history and the high tension all round have brought about a situation in which India has acquired a strategic position which is absolutely focal."

INDIA TO GUARD PLACE

"Events that occur in the neighbourhood of India are bound to have repercussions straightway in India and we know where a great tension exists. It is next door to India. An independent India to-day would be a great guarantee of peace throughout the world and will stem the tide of ambitions all round. This is a great point of absolute urgency which demands that India's settlement should be lifted out of a local and internal conditions and placed on the basis of the world's demand for peace and herefore the strengthening of India's defence by Indians themselves. It is in the light of these events that I am hopeful of a settlement which should be satisfactory to India, to Britain and the world.

JINNAH'S CHARGE DENIED

The Congress President emphatically denied Mr. Jinnah's assertion that the Congress created obstacles in the way of the League forming Ministries or that they ignored the Muslim League in provincial assemblies where Congress had an absolute majority. "I regret," Maulana Azad said, "That the actual facts of the situation have not been correctly assessed. In fact a wrong interpretation is put on the actual approach which the Congress has made in regard to formation of Ministries.

MINISTRY-MAKING

"In Sind although the strength of the League Party was 28 and that of the Coalition Party was 29, a clear offer was made that there should be an all-party Ministry with four Ministers each from the League and the Coalition Party respectively. But this offer was turned down. ~~xxxx~~ Again in Assam where the Congress had an absolute majority of 62 in a House of 108 and therefore did not depend on any "outside"

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help for the stability of the Ministry, the Congress offered to take two Ministers from the League Party on the basis of a Coalition.

"This offer too" the Congress President said "was turned down. The Congress has even now kept two places reserved which were originally reserved for the League."

SITUATION IN PUNJAB

"In the Punjab a responsible leader of the Muslim League Party suggested the following formula for a coalition Ministry : "The Congress and League Parties in the Punjab agree to form a Coalition Party on the basis of equal representation in the Cabinet and each party to nominate in the Cabinet its choice. The question of Pakistan will be left to be decided by the respective All-India High Commands of the two Parties and will not be raised in the Punjab Legislative Assembly by either of us while the Coalition lasts."

(Message Incomplete)

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WHY LEAGUE
KEPT OUT

Azad on Ministry Making In
Punjab

NEW DELHI Mar. 18.

Referring to the League-Congress Coalition formula submitted by a prominent Leaguer to him in the Punjab (repeated earlier) Maulana Azad said :

"I gave my consent to this document even without changing a comma" the Maulana Sahab said. "To the best of my information and belief," he said, "All responsible leaders of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League had agreed to this formula and were keen on its being accepted by us. But when the question was referred to Mr. Jinnah who was then in Shillong, it is said that he rejected the formula except under one condition, namely, that no Muslim would be included in the quota reserved for the Congress Party."

"On the basis of this formula the proposal was that there should be five Ministers each from the Congress and the League Party respectively. Mr. Jinnah contended that the Congress must give an undertaking that no Muslim should be included in its quota. I was not prepared to agree to this dictation. Further it was totally inconsistent with the formula suggested by the responsible and prominent Muslim League leaders namely that each party had the right to nominate in the Cabinet any member it chose."

WHY LEAGUE KEPT OUT

Therefore the choice lay between either Section 93 coming into operation or forming a Coalition with the Unionist Party, which in fact was done. It is perfectly obvious that the entire responsibility for keeping out of the Ministry in the Punjab lies at the door of the League.

"It is notable," the Congress President said, "that although the convention in the Punjab so far has been that Muslims and non-Muslims in the Cabinet have been equal in number, according to the above formula if the Congress had

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been left free to offer a Muslim to the Cabinet, the Muslim majority province would also have had a majority of Muslims in the Cabinet.

DOOR STILL OPEN

"Obviously the door is open everywhere and even now if the League is prepared to work out the formula in its spirit, I believe that Malik Khizr Hyat Khan Tiwana, the Leader of the Unionist Party, will prefer not to stand in the way."

- (A.P.)

Saturday, March 23, 1946.

ONLY NATIONAL GOVT. CAN
SOLVE FOOD PROBLEM

.....

Maulana Azad Explains Food
Committee Boycott Decision

Interviewed on Friday, the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, explained to an Associated Press of India representative the Congress decision not to be represented on the Food Advisory Committee proposed by the Viceroy.

The President said that "the Working Committee firmly believes that until a National Government comes into power, no effective work could be done with regard to the food crisis. No advisory board can be a substitute for National Government.

"There are 400 million people in India, out of whom only 53 millions can be brought under an effective system of rationing and control. These are the Government of India figures. The remaining 347 millions can be controlled only by creating a sense of self-confidence and self-sacrifice. This sense would not be possible to create unless a National Government is formed at the Centre."

However, added Maulana Azad, the Working Committee had done whatever was possible for it to do under the circumstances, as could be found out from its last resolution incorporating the 15-point programme. Provincial Congress Committees would take up propaganda on these lines, and for this necessary instructions had already been issued.

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1. 1946

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MINISTRY-MAKING IN BENGAL

Azad Requests European Group To Maintain Strict Neutrality

So far as the formation of a Ministry was concerned, the Congress President thought that the position was somewhat different. It was his opinion that in the existing political atmosphere the European groups should maintain an attitude of strict neutrality and leave it to the Indian groups to act as they thought best in the interests of their respective provinces.

He felt that it would benefit neither the European Party nor any Indian Party to enter into a coalition for the purpose of forming a Ministry in the existing circumstances. In Bengal during the life of the last Assembly and recently in Sind the European Group have allied themselves with a particular party in order to enable it to form a Ministry. In the opinion of the President, the European Group had gained nothing but lost a great deal by such partisanship.

Asked about the Parliamentary position in Bengal as it had emerged from the general elections, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, told the Associated Press of India that he had asked the Provincial Congress Committee to convene a meeting of the newly elected Congress members of the Bengal Legislature on the 5th April. He proposed to return from Delhi on the 5th in order to participate in that meeting. The Congress President did not wish to say anything on the Parliamentary position in Bengal till that meeting had been held and the situation reviewed.

Replying to another enquiry, Maulana Azad elucidated his statement in Patna on Saturday that the Congress would not form a coalition with the European Group in Bengal when the question of forming a Ministry arose. He stated that the Congress was always ready to cooperate with all other parties including the European Group in the service of the province. The situation which faced the province today rendered such cooperation all the more necessary. The problem of food had become so insistent

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that it was the first duty of every party to attempt to solve it in cooperation with others and for this purpose forget all past differences. The Congress Party would welcome the cooperation of the European Group as of any other party for such purpose.

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13, 1946

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OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE IN ELECTION

OPEN CANVASSING FOR LEAGUE

MAULANA AZAD'S STRONG CONDEMNATION

Inter-Provincial Conspiracy To Weaken ^{Freedom's} Struggle.

Commenting on reports of alleged official interference in connection with the recent elections to the Central Assembly and different provincial legislatures, Maulana Azad said :

"In spite of a large mass of evidence at my disposal I have deliberately refrained from any comment on the manner in which the adherents of the Muslim League interfered with the free exercise of votes during the election to the Central Assembly and the different provincial legislatures. The reports which I have received about the election to the Bengal Legislative Assembly are, however, of a nature that compel me to comment publicly on this question. I have it from unimpeachable sources the official interference, corruption and ~~intimidation~~ intimidation of the worst type have vitiated the Bengal election in a manner that is almost without parallel in the history of election anywhere.

^I GOVERNOR'S PARTISANSHIP

"The first thing to which I want to draw public notice is the open partisanship of Government officials of all classes throughout India for the Muslim League. Forgetful of their oath of neutrality as public servants, they have from Calcutta to Peshwar openly and flagrantly acted in the interest of the Muslim League. This has been specially noticeable in the case of European officials. I have numerous reports on this point from almost every province and specially for the North Western Frontier. In the Frontier Province things went so far that even Sir George ^UCunningham, late Governor of the Province, entered the lists openly in favour of the League and canvassed against the Congress candidates. In a marriage ceremony at Hotimardan which was attended by a large number of influential men of the district, the Governor openly asked the Nawab to join the league and stand as a candidate in its behalf. A European Deputy Commissioner

EX April, 3, 1946

← canvassed openly in favour of the League candidate and approached voters individually. His wife was so keen on the victory of the League that she forgot her position and approached voters individually to persuade them to vote ~~X~~for the League. There is a custom in the Frontier that when a Pathan offers a gift of a 'Dopatta' (cloak) to a woman she becomes his sister. This lady went to the Pathan voters and asked from them a 'Dopatta' and said that they could offer her the 'Dopatta' by voting for the League candidate. In spite of these attempts of the Governor and his officials the Congress won with a comfortable majority in the Province and proved the strength of its hold on the people.

NOT LOVE FOR ISLAM

"I have wondered at times why officials and specially the European officials have been so anxious for the success of the League. No sane person will, for a moment, believe that this can be due to any special love for Islam and Moslems. The real reason seems to be that the question of Indian independence has reached a stage when it can no longer be denied. The officials have, therefore, clung at any straw in order to create obstacle for the postponement of that consummation. The support for the League is to be explained by their belief that the League is perhaps the last card which the Imperialist can play for a postponement of the decision ^{on} the Indian issue. There has, therefore, been an inter-provincial conspiracy of Government officials in order to do everything possible to help the cause of the League ^{can} ~~can~~ candidates and thus try to weaken the Indian national struggle for independence. This is fresh corroboration of the popular Indian belief that in India it is the bureaucracy that rules and even the Viceroy is often powerless against the official clique, for I know that Lord Wavell issued instructions for strict official neutrality and he is the last person to countenance such activity of the officials.

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"So far as the provincial election in Bengal is concerned it is a long and sordid story of official interference and corruption of the worst type. I propose to discuss them on Wednesday.

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Thursday, April, 4, 1946.

MAULANA AZAD MEETS CABINET DELEGATION

Congress Stand 'Fully & Frankly'
Explained

DISCUSSION ON FREEDOM & UNITED INDIA BASIS

'I Have Come Back Very Happy'

NEW DELHI, April 3.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad told journalists. "I explained the Congress stand fully and frankly to-day to the Mission. In all discussions which the Congress participates, we are proceeding on the basis of complete independence without any reservations and on the basis of a united India.

According to Maulana Azad, Mahatma Gandhi had indicated both to the Mission and the Congress President that if he would be of any service to them by continuing/he was willing to remain. Maulana Azad has asked Mahatma Gandhi to stay on and expects he will do so.

Maulana Azad was asked if there was any special reason why he had spent not more than an hour and three quarters with the Mission, though three hours had originally been allotted for his interview. "My interview was for serious purposeful talk and not for occupying time," he replied.

The Maulana indicated that his meeting with the Mission to-day was in the nature of a first sitting. He could not, however, say whether there would be a series of meetings with the members of the Mission, but he expected that after his return from Calcutta about April 6 or 7, he would remain in touch with the Mission.

The Congress President, called on Mahatma Gandhi this morning at 6-30 and had talks with him for about an hour. He was followed by Sardar Vallabhai Patel who remained with Mahatma Gandhi for about 20 minutes.

Earlier, Dr. Khan Saheb Frontier Premier, called on Mahatma Gandhi at 5-15 and had discussions with him for an hour.

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Maulana Azad called on Sir Tej Bahardur Sapru shortly after 4 P.M. and was with him for nearly an hour.

Sir Stafford Cripps called on at Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's residence this afternoon and had a sixty-five-minute talk with him. Maulana Azad told Pressmen that the talks were in continuation of the morning discussion.

Mr. Asaf Ali was also present.

" GOAL VERY VERY NEAR "

"Why don't you now ask me about the distance of our goal as you had always been asking me since so many months? I am in a position to tell you to-day that our goal is now very very near and we are going to reach the same very soon."

The above remark was volunteered by Maulana Azad when the special representative, United Press called on him after his return from interview with the Cabinet Mission.

United Press gathers from informed Congress circles that in course of interviews with the Cabinet Mission this morning, the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, emphasised that while the interim government which is to be established at the Centre would enjoy the status of the present Executive Council of the Viceroy pending revision or modification of the Government of India Act, 1935, there must be a definite assurance or what may be called a "gentleman's" agreement on the part of the Viceroy that the majority decision of this interim government would not be subject to his 'veto'.

It may be recalled a similar assurance was demanded at Gandhiji's instance and eventually secured from Lord Linlithgow in 1937 before Congress permitted its own nominees to form ministries in different provinces.

Sir Tej ^{Bahadur} ~~Bhadur~~ Sapru has been requested to continue his stay in Delhi to be available for advice and guidance. Sir Tej ^{Bahadur} ~~Bhadur~~ Sapru had originally intended to leave for Allahabad to-day. — A P)

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Friday, April 5, 1946.

BENGAL ELECTIONS REDUCED TO A MOCKERY

Hooliganism Of League Supporters
At Its Worst

AZAD CITES NUMEROUS CASES

Enquiry Demanded For Grossest Official
Partisanship

...

NEW DELHI, April 4,

Elections in Bengal were reduced to a mockery, says Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in a detailed statement.

The League was able to secure their help in order to arouse religious fanaticism on an unprecedented scale. Instead of raising or discussing any political issue the elections were turned into a religious crusade. Fatwas were issued that to vote against the League would lead to eternal dam^mnation. Non-league candidates were branded as heretics and infidels and it was stated that their return would lead to the banishment of Islam from India. Verbal exhortation of these Pirs and Moulvis went even beyond the Fatwas.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

To the terrors of religious condemnation of the most virulent type ~~were~~^{was} added physical violence on an unprecedented scale. The failure of the Government to maintain peace and order during the elections was so glaring that it makes one suspect that there was conspiracy behind it. I have already referred to the inter-provincial conspiracy of Government officials to help the League in the recent elections. In Bengal this conspiracy was seen in its most naked form. In many cases officials openly sided with the League. I have been told by responsible public men, whose veracity I have no reason to doubt, that an overwhelming majority of Muslim officials have acted in a manner which made it difficult to understand whether they were public servants or agents of the League. Lower officials were encouraged and emboldened when they found that higher authorities took no notice of their activities.

I have little doubt that if an impartial tribunal is appointed to investigate into the matter it will bring to light cases of

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the grossest partisanship, favouritism, intervention and neglect of duty ^{by} numerous officers, high and low. Their conduct was such as to make one doubt the results of the elections itself, and has led to charges that they have in many cases tramped even with the ballot boxes.

Apart from the invocation of divine displeasure ~~in~~ and unconcealed official partisanship, the League depended chiefly on intimidation and violence for its electoral success. Candidates were denied the freedom of movement necessary for the election campaign. Polling booths became centres of violence and hooliganism. Secrecy of the ballot was violated. Polling agents of other parties were not allowed to act.

ASSAULT AND BATTERY

Houses of non-League candidates and their supporters were ~~xxxx~~ set on fire. There are innumerable cases of assault and battery. Neither life nor property of non-League candidates was safe. Nor was this due to any overwhelming support of the League by the general people. Other parties had issued strict instructions to their adherents to maintain a peaceful atmosphere; but the restraint of all the other parties only served to ^aaggravate the hooliganism and violence of the supporters of the League. There are various places in Bengal where there is considerable support for other parties and there is little doubt that in such areas candidates of the Muslim Parliamentary Board of the Krishak Proja Party would have, if they had so desired, retaliated against hooliganism, but they were bent on maintaining an atmosphere of peace and non-violence. Where supporters of non-League candidates took matters in their own hands as in Barisal, some parts of Khulna, Faridpur, Mymensingh and Murshidabad and resisted hooliganism, non-League candidates were returned with overwhelming majorities.

GLARING EXAMPLES

It is impossible for me to mention all such instances in the course of a brief statement but a few of the more glaring samples are detailed below :-

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(1) A large number of Pirs and Mullahs were induced by the League to issue 'Fatwas' or edit exhorting voters to vote for League candidates on pain of eternal punishment after death.

(2) As instances of official interference I would refer to Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemi, ex-Deputy Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly who charged the Sub-Divisional Officer, Satkhira, for inciting the mob to attack his car at the Mahmudpur polling centre on the 19th of March. The District Magistrate had to intervene and issue an injunction under Section 144. Mr. Fazlul Huq wrote to the Governor that a circle officer in the Bagerhat constituency was a close relation of his rival, Dr. Moazzam who was the League candidate. This officer had already served for six years in the area and acquired considerable local influence which he was using openly for Dr. Moazzam. The Government made no comment on the fact of his relationship with the League candidate and replied that he had been a circle officer for only three years. This officer was not only not transferred in spite of repeated requests of Mr. Fazlul Huq but given every opportunity of helping the League candidate with his official support and influence.

Mr. Hausher Ali, ex-Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, openly charged a high district official of partisanship with the League and wired to the Governor that even the selection of sites for the polling booth showed his partisanship. All his protests were in vain.

ATTACK ON CANDIDATES

(3) The movement of candidates and their supporters was interfered with at every step. Reports of the attack on Mr. Fazlul Huq, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi and Mr. Mohiuddin Khan by the adherents of the League have already appeared in the newspapers. Such interference by the League increased during the provincial elections. On 5th December, 1945, Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemi was attacked and his car seriously damaged at Satkhira by hooligans shouting League slogans. On 27th December, 1945, he was again assaulted by Leaguers in the presence of police officials in Kaliganj police station

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and the car by which he was travelling overturned. On the 19th March, 1946, his car was again attacked by Leaguers and damaged in the presence of police officers at the Mamudpur polling centre.

Mr. Syed Badrudojja, candidate for Berhampur rural constituency, was not allowed by agents of the League to enter the Bhagirathpur polling booth which had been captured by hooligans, Dr. Sanaulla, candidate for Chittagang North-east constituency was attacked on the 5th March at Hannupur in Phatikchari police station in the presence of the sub-registrar, the Muhammadan Marriage Registrar, the President of the Union Board, and the head master of the local school by agents of the League who smashed his motor car. The next day, another car in which he was travelling was turned back from Fatehabad, and when he tried to travel by train, he was pelted with stones at Choudhuryhat Railway Station. Mr. Syed Nausher Ali, ex-Speaker of the Bengal Assembly, was attacked when addressing meetings at Magura, Bangaon, Nahata, Charabhita, and Lohatare. At Nahata, a taxi hired by him was thrown in the river and it is reported that a man wounded ^{there} ~~there~~ subsequently succumbed to his injuries.

ABDUCTED AND CONFINED

Mr. Habibur Rahman Choudhury, a candidate from Tippera North-East, was abducted and kept confined till rescued by the police. Mr. Kasem Ali, a candidate for Kishoreganj was kept confined in his house under threat of murder. Mr. Mohiuddin Anwar, ^[sic] Mr. Barat Ali, a candidate from Serajganj was abducted and forced to declare that he would withdraw from the election contest. ~~The houses of Mouivition contest.~~ The house of Moulvi Reazuddin Ahmad, candidate from Nilphamari and Moulana Muniruz Bamain Islamabadi, a candidate from Chittagong were burnt. When the fire fighting service from ⁱ Saadpur tried to put out the fire the hooligans cut the hose pipe and threatened those who came to help him. Moulvi Abdur Rezak, ² candidate from Feni, was prevented from going to the polling station ~~on~~ the date of polling and was not allowed by hooligans to come out of his house to submit the names of his polling agents.

(4) Cases of intimidation and violence at the polling station

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are reported from almost every constituency in Berhampur rural constituency; hooligans captured the polling booths at Goruimair, Bhagirathpur and Jalangi centres, assaulted and drove away genuine voters and recorded bogus votes at will. Similar incidents ^phappened at the Srappur, Miksimil~~X~~, Chankhali and Jamirahat polling centres in Khulna Sadar constituency. Voters were similarly assaulted ^{and} driven away and bogus votes ^{were} recorded in Katirahat, Nannupur, Gahira and Fatehpur polling centres in Chittagong north-east constituency. At Fatehpur, Nur Ahmad, the election agent of Dr. Sanaulla, was assaulted and robbed in broad daylight. The Madrasa, library and mosque at Nazirhat in Fatikchhari Police station were burnt.

In Feni constituency, voters were driven from Sarsadin Sundarpur, Adharbani, Pathannagar and Fulgazi polling centres and ballots were found in packets of fifteen and twenty inside the ballot box. Similar reports have been received from almost every polling centre in the district of Jessore.

NEED OF ENQUIRY

It is for me a painful task to have to record such severe indictment of Government officials generally and of Muslim officers in particular, but I have been forced to do so by a sense of duty. Excesses are to be deprecated even if they are committed by non-official supporters of the Muslim League, but they become intolerable when they are committed by members of the public service who break their oath of office and act as partisans of a political organisation. I am convinced that a strong case has been made for an enquiry into the conduct of officials who have been mentioned to me by name by prominent public men on a charge of grave dereliction of duty and the Government owe it to themselves and to the future advance of the province to hold a wholesale enquiry. I am further convinced that if such an enquiry is conducted, ^eThe elections are bound to be set aside in many

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constituencies in Bengal and if elections are held in a manner where voters can exercise their franchise freely and without fear a large majority of such seats will be won by candidates opposed to the policy of the Muslim League - (A.P.)

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SJ. K.S. ROY ELECTED PARTY LEADER

Congress Legislators' Meeting :

Maulana Azad's Advice

At a joint meeting of the newly elected Congress members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and also Congress members of the Bengal Legislative Council held on Friday evening at the Kumarsingh Hall, Calcutta, Sj. Kiran Sankar Roy was unanimously elected leader of the Bengal Assembly Congress Party and also President of the Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who arrived by air from New Delhi presided.

AZAD'S ADVICE

Addressing the meeting Maulana Azad said that they were very near the desired goal of freedom to-day. To reach it they had to go just three steps. But they must be very cautious, for, if they took one wrong step the country might go back a long way.

Many pitfalls beset the few paces that had yet to be trod, such as indiscipline and dissipated tendencies, and they must guard against them, added the Congress President. Unity and discipline were the two essential needs of the moment.

He said that though, according to the calendar, only nine years had elapsed since the first Bengal Legislature under the 1935 constitution met, the country had advanced by 50 or even 100 years during the period.

Later, Maulana Sahib replied to questions put by members.

Replying to one question he said that the Congress had made its position abundantly clear that it wanted one ^{federal} ~~federal~~ structure for the whole of India in which the units would co-operate. Whatever Mr. Jinnah might do, the Congress would

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not deflect from the course it had adopted. The Congress President declined to disclose the nature of his talks with the Cabinet Mission.

He advised patience when asked by press representative whether a Congress-League coalition ministry was possible in Bengal and whether negotiations between the two parties were in progress. ...

Monday, April 8, 1946.

"WE ARE AT DOOR OF INDEPENDENCE"

Maulana Azad's Optimism About Delhi Talk
Outcome
...

NEW DELHI, April 7.

In an interview to United Press Special Representative, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, gave interesting answer to some of the questions put to him, indicating the trend of talks with the British Cabinet Mission and chances of its success.

To the question - "Are you optimistic about the outcome of the present negotiations?" the Maulana answered with a beaming face, "In Delhi every thing is in my favour except the climate. I told you the other day and I tell you now, that we are at the door of our temple of independence. We will reach it very soon."

Question: Why are you so much optimistic? Do you think the Imperialists intend to quit the Empire?

Answer - The forces that are working in India are compelling them to quit. They cannot help it. Conditions and forces that were working in the contrary have taken a new turn in our favour and against the Government. I have been answering it since my release in June last. The situation is such to-day that I find hopes on all sides.

Q. - Will Congress make another attempt to bring about a rapprochement with the Muslim League?

A - I do not want to answer this question. I may be misunderstood.

Maulana Azad added, explaining the position of the Congress, "Congress stands for independence without reservation and a united India. But realising the variety of India and wishing to preserve it, and in order to give the fullest amount of freedom to the units created after redistribution of boundaries of the present provinces, Congress stands for a great deal of autonomy to each Unit within the federation, so that units may live as they wish." - (U.P).

Sunday, April 14, 1946.

AZAD DENIES TALK ON CONFEDERATION PLAN

NEW DELHI, April 13.

The Congress Working Committee held a further sitting this morning at the Congress President's residence. The session lasted two and a half hours.

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, told the Press that the Committee had further discussion on the present negotiations.

The Congress President said that the questions of Confederation did not arise before the Committee either in the morning or afternoon sitting of the Committee yesterday.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, after coming out of the morning sitting of the Congress Working Committee, told waiting pressmen that he had been surprised to read in the papers about the Working Committee discussing a confederation plan for the settlement of the Indian constitutional issue. That story had absolutely no foundation whatsoever, he said and added: "Neither in the morning sitting nor in the evening sitting of the Committee yesterday did we discuss anything like it." - (A.P.)

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Tuesday, April 16, 1946.

AZAD'S VISION OF FREE INDIA

A SOCIALIST REGIME

Square Meal & Square Deal For Workers
& Peasants

LONDON, April 14.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Muslim President of the National Congress, told the New Delhi correspondent of 'Reynold's News':

"My vision of a free India is of a Socialist India. I want to see the millions of workers and peasants of my country get a square meal and a square deal as a matter of right."

Another comment he made was : "I agree with Ernest Bevin that the old concept of State Sovereignty will have to be given up in time and that the Sovereign Powers of the individual States must be merged in a world authority."

Of future Indian-British relations, Azad is reported as saying : "The future relations of our two countries are to be regulated by a Treaty and I have no doubt that the terms of the Treaty will be acceptable and mutually beneficial to both India and Britain as the Treaty will be signed by two independent and equal partners."

He added that the question of India remaining in the British Commonwealth was primarily a question for the constitution-making body, but said that if the Indian-British negotiations were settled satisfactorily, "India will have more friendly relations with the British than with any other peoples."

The New Delhi correspondent of the 'Sunday Chronicle' reports that Congress has a "secret new plan for independent India" which has been approved by the Working Committee and which Azad, as the President of the Committee, will "lay before the British Cabinet Mission on Wednesday."

The plan is said to be on the basis of confederation.

- (Globe).

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Wednesday, April 17, 1946.

AZAD LIKES C.R. TO BE LEADER

MADRAS MINISTRY-MAKING

Wire To Tamil Nad C.C. President

MADRAS, April 15.

The Congress President has sent the following telegram dated 12th instant to Mr. Kamraj Nadar, President of the Tamil Nad Congress Committee. The telegram reads :- " Please convey the following message to the party meeting on the 18th. After considering all aspects I advise the election of Mr. C. Rajagopal-achari as the party leader. Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhai Patel also hold the same view. But we do not wish to impose our advise on you. If the majority of the party does not want to follow our advise, it is free to decide on its own responsibility." ...

- (A.P.)

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Wednesday, April 17, 1946.

PAKISTAN AGAINST MUSLIM'S' INTERESTS

AZAD'S ANALYSIS

Congress Formula The Only Solution

NEW DELHI, April 16.

Stating his views as an Indian and a Muslim on Pakistan and Mr. Jinnah's two-nation theory Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, in course of a statement (substantially published yesterday) said :

"As is well-known, Mr. Jinnah's Pakistan scheme is based on his two-nation theory. His thesis is that India contains many nationalities based on religious differences. Of them the two major nations, the Hindus and Muslims, must as separate nations have separate States. When Dr. Edward Thomson once pointed out to Mr. ^{Jinnah} ~~Jinnah~~ that Hindus and Muslims live side by side in thousands of Indian towns, villages and hamlets, Mr. Jinnah replied that this in no way affected their separate nationality. Two nations, according to Mr. Jinnah, confront one another in every hamlet, village and town, and he, therefore, desires^x that they should be separated into two States.

"I am prepared to overlook all other aspects of the problem and judge it from the point of view of Muslim interests alone. I shall go still further and say that if it can be shown that the scheme of Pakistan can to any way benefit Muslims as such, I would be prepared to accept it myself and also to work for its acceptance by others. But the truth is that even if I examine the scheme from the point of view of the communal interests of the Muslims themselves, I am forced to the conclusion that it can in no way benefit them or allay their legitimate fears.

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MUSLIMS IN 'HINDUSTAN' STATE

"Let us consider dispassionately the consequences which will follow if we give effect to the Pakistan scheme. India will be divided into two states, one with a majority of Muslims and the other of Hindus. In the Hindustan State there will remain $3\frac{1}{2}$ crores of Muslims scattered in small minorities all over the land. With 17 per cent in U.P. 12 percent in Bihar and 9 per cent in Madras, they will be weaker than they are to-day in the Hindu majority provinces. They have had their homelands in these regions for almost a thousand years and built up the most well-known centres of Muslim culture and civilisation there.

SOLVES NO PROBLEMS

" They will awaken overnight and discover that they have become aliens and foreigners. Back-ward industrially, educationally and economically, they will be left to the mercies of what would become an unadulterated Hindu Raj.

"On the other hand, their position within the Pakistan state will be vulnerable and weak. Nowhere in Pakistan will their majority be comparable to the Hindu majority in the Hindustan State. In fact, their majority will be so slight that it will be offset by the economical, educational and political lead enjoyed by non-Muslims in these areas. Even if this were not so and Pakistan were overwhelmingly Muslim in population, it still could hardly solve the problem of Muslims in Hindustan. Two states confronting one another offer no solution of the problem of one another's minorities, but only lead to retribution and reprisals by introducing a system of mutual hostages. The scheme of Pakistan therefore solves no problem for the Muslims. It cannot safeguard their rights where they are in a minority nor as citizens of Pakistan secure them a position in India or world affairs which they

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would enjoy as citizens of a major state like the Indian Union.

EMOTIONAL FRENZY

"It may be argued that if, Pakistan is so much against the interests of the Muslims themselves, why should such a large section of Mussalmans be swept away by its lure. The answer is to be found in the attitude of certain communal extremists among the Hindus. When the Muslim League began to speak of Pakistan, they read into the scheme a sinister pan-Islamic conspiracy and began to oppose it out of fear that it foreshadowed a combination of Indian Muslims with trans-Indian Muslim States. The opposition acted as an incentive to the adherents of the League. With simple though untenable logic, they argued that if Hindus were so opposed to Pakistan, surely, it must be of benefit to Muslims. An atmosphere of emotional frenzy was created which made reasonable appraisement impossible and swept away especially the younger and more impressionable among the Muslims. ~~I have, however, no doubt the Muslims.~~ I have, however, no doubt that when the present frenzy has died down and the question can be considered dispassionately, those who now support Pakistan will themselves repudiate it as harmful for Muslim interests.

RESIDUARY POWER IN PROVINCES

"The formula which I have succeeded in making the Congress to accept secures whatever merit the Pakistan scheme contains, while all its defects and drawbacks are avoided. The basis of Pakistan is the fear of interference by the Centre in Muslim majority areas as the Hindus will be in a majority in the Centre. The Congress meets this fear by granting full autonomy to the provincial units and vesting all residuary power in the provinces. It also has provided for two lists of Central subjects, one compulsory and one optional., so that if any provincial units so want, it can administer all subjects itself except a minimum delegated

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to the Centre. The Congress scheme, therefore, ensures that Muslim majority provinces are internally free to develop- as they will, but can at the same time influence the Centre on all issues which affect India as a whole.

ALLAYING MUSLIM FEAR

"The situation in India is such that all attempts to establish a centralised and unitary government are bound to fail. Equally, doomed to failure is the attempt to divide India into two states. After considering all aspects of the question, I have come to the conclusion that the only solution can be on the lines embodied in the Congress formula which allow room for development both to the provinces and to India as a whole. The Congress formula meets the fears of the Muslim majority areas to allay which the scheme of Pakistan was formed; on the other hand, it avoids the defects of the Pakistan scheme which would bring the Muslims where they are in a minority under a purely Hindu Government." -

I am one of those who consider the present chapter of communal bitterness and differences as a transient phase in Indian life. I firmly hold that they will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny. I am reminded of a saying of Mr. Gladstone that the best cure for a man's fear of the water was to throw him into it, for he would then learn to swim and realise that it is not so dangerous as it had seemed to his imagination. Similarly India must assume responsibility and administer her own affairs. When India attains her destiny, she will forget the present chapter of communal suspicion and conflict and face the problems of modern life from a modern point of view.

Differences

Differences will no doubt persist, but they will be economic not communal. Opposition among political parties will continue, but they will be based, not on religion but on economic and political issues. Class and not community will be the basis of future alignments and policies will be shaped accordingly. If it be argued that this is only faith which events may not justify.

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I would say that in any case the nine crores of Muslims constitute a factor which nobody can ignore and whatever the circumstances, they are strong enough to safeguard their own destiny." - (A.P.)

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Saturday, April 20, 1946.

FIGHT AGAINST SMUTS' BILL

Azad's Message: India To Support Any
Well-Thought Out Struggle

NEW DELHI, April 19.

"It is difficult to advise from a distance. Suffering will be yours. If you have strength and self-sacrifice you will count no suffering too great. But you are final judges. Your deputation here strongly favours passive resistance. India will support any well-thought out struggle. Support can only be moral. May God guide you."

Thus says Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in reply to a cable from the Transvaal Indian Congress asking for a message to be read at a meeting of the Indians at Johannesburg on Sunday~~X~~ next to protest against the passing of the anti-Indian bill.

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Thursday, April 25, 1946.

NEW PATH TO WORLD PEACE

Azad's Optimism Re: Delhi Talks

DEHRA DUN, April 24.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressing a gathering here while on his way to Delhi from Mussoorie said: "Hitherto the fate of countries was decided on battlefields but these days we are having a new experience in world history in as much we are being offered independence by Britain. If this comes true, the world which is starving for peace, will be thankful to India for showing a new path to world peace."

The Congress President struck a note of optimism regarding Delhi talks - (A.P.)

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Saturday, April 27, 1946.

AZAD WANTS NEHRU TO SUCCEED HIM

NEXT CONGRESS PRESIDENT

Working Committee Members Agree

NEW DELHI April 26.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the most likely next Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who has held this office for six years now - the longest period for any individual to be Congress President - in a statement to-day declared that under the present circumstances, Pandit Nehru is the best choice. He added that his colleagues in the Working Committee shared his view.

Maulana Azad says: "Now that election of Congress delegates from different provinces is over and the time has come for the choice of President for next year, I consider it my duty to place my views on the question before the public. Ever since I came out of jail, there have been suggestions from various quarters that I should continue as President for another year. I have tried to discourage such move for reasons which I shall now place before the public. I have borne the responsibilities of Congress President for over six years continuously a period that was unprecedented in the history of the Congress. Circumstances were such that this was inevitable, and I have tried to discharge my duties and serve my country to the best of my ability. Now, however, I must ask to be excused. After consideration it is my belief that the person best suited to carry out these duties in the changed circumstances is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This is my personal opinion, but I am glad to find from informal discussion with friends and colleagues that they share my opinion. The choice however, is with the delegates and they are free to exercise their right as they will." ... - (A.P.)

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Monday, April 29, 1946.

CONGRESS PRESIDENCYSHIP

No Change Till Plenary Session :
Azad Explains Position

NEW DELHI April 28.

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview stated that his attention had been drawn to the various Press comments regarding the assumption of office by a new President. Constitutional position had been misunderstood by many, and foreign Correspondents could not be blamed if they had added the confusion.

The position was that the new Congress delegates proceeded for the election of a President for the next year almost immediately after their own election, but the person chosen remained the President-elect till he had presided over the plenary session. He became the President of A.I.C.C only at the subjects Committee of the plenary session.

Asked further if there was any truth in the reports that he wanted to hand over charge to the new incumbent even before the session, the Congress President said that he had been President continuously for six years and was looking forward to laying down the burden of office.

The constitution of the Congress was, however, explicit on the point and did not furnish a change over till the plenary session.

It was difficult to lay down an exact date for the next session but obviously it could not be before November at the earliest.

[sic]
Much, he desired rest, he did not want to violate the rules or create a new precedent for considerations of personal convenience and would carry on till the next plenary session. ... (A.P.)

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Saturday, May 4, 1946.

THREATENED RLY. STRIKE

Azad's Appeal Against Precipitate
A c t i o n

SIMLA, May 3.

An appeal to railway men in India not to take any precipitate action at this stage when delicate negotiations are going on and the country is threatened with a famine during the next two or three months, is made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, in a statement issued to-day.

The statement has been issued on the eve of the threatened strike of railwaymen.

The following is the text of the Congress President's statement:

"I have been aware for some time past of the grievances and complaints of Indian railway men. They have been pressing for revision, gradual absorption of trained temporary railwaymen into the permanent cadre and improvement in their conditions of work with special reference to hours of employment and leave rules. They have again and again declared their willingness to abide by the decision of an arbitrator if the Government consider their demand unjustified. I understand, however, that after great delay, only the questions of hours of employment and leave rules have referred to adjudication.

"The recent ballot for strike has proved the widespread discontent which to-day obtains among railwaymen. I have every sympathy with their genuine grievances and have been convinced of their good faith by their readiness to refer all questions in dispute to adjudication. The Congress which attempts to solve all disputes, whether political or industrial, by methods of discussion and negotiation, cannot but support the Federation's demand for adjudication on the question at issue.

"The railway men of India should, however, remember one thing. They are a part of the nation and therefore what concerns the nation, concerns them equally. They know that at present delicate negotia -

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Saturday, May 4, 1946.

are going on for a settlement of India's political problem. They must realise that there can be no real solution of their own difficulties till the country is free. They also know the acute food situation in the country. May and June threaten to be the most difficult period and any dislocation in transport during this critical period may prove to be disastrous.

"I have had detailed reports of the case of railwaymen from Mr. Humayun Kadir, President of the B.A. Railway Employees' Association. I would have sent him to Bombay to persuade railwaymen that at this juncture the solution of all problems depends upon a satisfactory political settlement, but important work compels me to detain him here. I would appeal to railwaymen not to take any precipitate action at this state. They will only strengthen their case if they now hold their hands for the sake of national interest."

= (A.P.).

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Monday, May 6, 1946.

NOT TO YIELD ON ANY FUNDAMENTALS

UNITY & INDEPENDENCE

Azad Reiterates Congress Stand at
Tripartite Conference

SIMLA, May, 5.

It is believed that the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's speech at this morning's Tripartite conference followed the broad outlines of his letter to the Secretary of State, in reply to the invitation to the Congress to attend the conference. Maulana Azad is understood to have reiterated the Congress stand and made it clear that the Congress had gone the maximum extent to meet the legitimate grievances of the minorities, particularly the Muslims, in the formula which he enunciated in his statement issued from Delhi. Maulana Azad is reported to have emphasised, that the Congress could not agree to any scheme or proposal for a new constitutional set up which envisaged division of the country. The Congress stood by its policy of unity of India through federation, with the provinces exercising the maximum amount of autonomy including residuary powers. The Congress could not lose sight of its main objective, namely, Indian independence. No scheme or proposal which militated against these two cardinal principles of the Congress - unity and complete independence of India - would be acceptable to the Congress. The acceptance of the invitation by the Congress to attend the conference was, as indicated in his letter subject to these conditions. Maulana Azad is also reported to have made it clear that the Congress would not yield on these fundamentals.

- (A.P.) ...

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Monday, May 6, 1946.

RAILWAY STRIKE ON JUNE 27 IF DEMANDS NOT MET

AZAD'S APPEAL TO VICEROY

BOMBAY, May 5.

A New Delhi message states that the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who has been taking a very great interest in the threatened all-India railway strike, has written to Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, urging upon him to intervene in the matter and avert a serious crisis which a strike of railwaymen at the present juncture is bound to cause.

The Congress President has urged upon the Viceroy to prevail upon the Railway Board either to meet the demands of the railwaymen or at least agree to refer their demands to adjudication so as to reassure the men that their demands are not being neglected. The Congress President has stressed the importance of averting a general strike of railwaymen at the present juncture.

It is understood that the Congress President has been assured that the matter is receiving the immediate attention of the Viceroy.

Prof. Humayun Kabir, President, B.A. Railway Employees' Association, announcing Congress President's intervention requests that no final step should be taken pending the outcome of the endeavours of the Congress President.....- (A.P. & U.P.)

.....

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

HOW SIMLA TALKS FAILED

POINTS OF FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

Full Text Of Tripartite Correspondence

...

NEW DELHI, May 18.

Points of fundamental difference which caused the failure of the Simla Conference are revealed in the tripartite correspondence published to-day comprising 21 documents and running to fourteen printed pages. The letters exchanged by the three parties set out the principles and suggested points of agreement put forward by the Cabinet Mission, a memorandum embodying the minimum demands of the Muslim League and points suggestion behalf of the Congress as basis of agreement.

The Conference which opened on Sunday, May 5, came near breakdown on May 8. On that date Mr. Jinnah, in a letter to the Secretary of State, said that no useful purpose would be served by discussing the points suggested by the Cabinet Mission. In a letter, dated, May 9, the Congress President stated that the Cabinet Mission's suggestions were not acceptable and went on to suggest the formation of an interim Provisional Government and reference to an independent tribunal of matters in dispute concerning the Constituent Assembly.

Meetings between Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah followed. ~~Pandit Nehru~~ In letters concerning these meetings, Pandit Nehru discussed the question of choosing a suitable umpire and said it would be desirable to exclude Englishmen, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. He added that he and his colleagues had drawn up a list from which a choice could be made and he presumed that Mr. Jinnah had also prepared a list of possible umpire. Mr. Jinnah replied that in their meetings not only the fixing of an umpire but several other points were discussed and that no agreement was arrived at on any of them.

Following is the full text of the correspondence and documents connected with the conference between the Cabinet

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

Delegation and His Excellency the Viceroy and representatives
of the Congress and ^{the} Muslims League in May 1946 :-

SECY. OF STATE'S LETTER

Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence to ~~Maulana~~ Abul Kalam Azad
and Mr. ^{Jinnah} ~~Jinnah~~, dated 27th April, 1946.

The Cabinet Mission and His Excellency the Viceroy have carefully reviewed the opinions expressed to them by the various representatives they have interviewed and have come to the conclusion that they should make one further attempt to obtain agreement between the Muslim League and the Congress.

"They realise that it would be useless to ask the two parties to meet unless they were able to place before them a basis of negotiation which could lead to such an agreement.

I am, therefore, asked to invite the Muslim League to send four negotiators to meet the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy together with a similar number from the Congress Working Committee with ^a view to discussing the possibility of agreement upon ~~such~~ a scheme based upon the following fundamental principles :-

" The future constitutional structure of British India to be as follows :-

A Union Government ^{ment} ~~ment~~ dealing with the following subjects :-

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. There will be two groups of provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces dealing with all other subjects which the provinces in the respective groups desire to be dealt with in common. The provincial governments will deal with all other subjects and will have all the residuary sovereign rights.

"It is contemplated that the Indian States will take their appropriate place in this structure on terms to be negotiated with them.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

"I would point out that we do not think it either necessary or ~~of~~ desirable further to elaborate these principles as all other matters could be dealt with in the course of the negotiations.

"If the ~~the~~ Muslim League and Congress are prepared to enter into negotiations on this basis you will perhaps be so good as to let me know the names of the four people appointed to negotiate on their behalf. As soon as I receive these I will let you know the locus of the negotiations which will in all probability be in Simla, where the climate will be more temperate."

AZAD'S REPLY

Letter from the President of the Congress to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, dated 28th April, 1946 :-

"I thank you for your letter of April 27th. I have consulted my colleagues of the Congress Working Committee in regard to the suggestion made by you, and they desire me to inform you that they have always been willing to discuss fully any matters concerning the future of India with representatives of the Muslim League or any other organisation. I must point out, however, that the "fundamental principles" which you mention require amplification and elucidation in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

"As you are aware, we have envisaged a Federal Union of autonomous units. Such a Federal Union must of necessity deal with certain essential subjects of which Defence and its allied subjects are the most important. It must be organic and must have both an executive and legislative machinery as well as the finance relating to these subjects and ^{the} power to raise revenues for these purposes in its own right. Without these functions and powers it would be weak ^a and disjointed and defence and progress in general would suffer. Thus among the common subjects in addition to Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications, there should be currency, customs, tariffs and such other subjects as may be found on closer scrutiny to be intimately allied to them.

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QUESTION OF GROUPS

"Your reference to two groups of provinces, the one of the predominately Hindu provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces, is not clear. The only predominantly Muslim provinces are the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan. Bengal and Punjab have a bare Muslim majority. We consider it wrong to form groups of provinces under the Federal Union and more so ^{on} religious or communal basis. It also appears that you ~~have~~ ^{leave} no choice to a province in the matter of joining or not joining a group. It is by no means certain that a province as constituted would like to join any particular group. In any event it would be wholly wrong to compel a province to function against its own wish.

"While we agree to the provinces having full power in regard to all remaining subjects as well as the residuary powers, we have also stated that it should be open to any province to exercise its ^{option} ~~opinion~~ to have more common subjects with the Federal Union. Any sub-federation within the Federal Union would weaken the Federal Centre and would be otherwise wrong. We do not therefore favour any such development.

"Regarding the Indian States we should like to make it clear that we consider it essential that they should be parts of the Federal Union in regard to the common subjects mentioned above. The manner of their coming into the Union can be considered fully later.

"You have referred to certain "fundamental principles" but there is no mention of the basic issue before us, that is, Indian Independence and the consequent withdrawal of the British Army from India. It is only on this basis that we can discuss the future of India or any interim arrangements ^{ment}.

"While we are ready to carry on negotiations with any party as to the future of India, we must state our convictions that reality will be absent from any negotiations whilst an outside ruling power still exists in India.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

"I have asked three of my colleagues of the Congress Working Committee, namely, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to accompany me in any negotiations that may take place as a result of your suggestion."

LEAGUE LEADER'S REPLY

Letter from the President of the Muslim League to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, dated 29th April 1946 :-

"I thank you for your letter of the 27th April which I placed before my Working Committee yesterday morning.

"My colleagues and I fully appreciate the further attempt that the Cabinet Mission and His Excellency the Viceroy are making to bring about an agreement between the Muslim League and the Congress by proposing a meeting of the representative of the two organisations for the purpose of negotiating an agreement. They, however, desire me to invite ~~xx~~ your attention to the position taken up by the Muslim League since the passing of the Lahore Resolution in 1940 and thereafter successively endorsed by the All-India Muslim League sessions and again by the convention of the Muslim League legislators, as recently as the 9th of April, 1946, as per copy enclosed.

"The Working Committee desire to point out that many important matters, both of principle and detail, in your brief letter, require elucidation and clarification, which in their opinion, can be achieved at the meeting proposed by you.

"Therefore, without prejudice or commitment, the Working Committee, in their anxiety to assist in finding an agreed solution of the Indian constitutional problem, have authorised me to nominate three representatives on behalf of the Muslim League to participate in the negotiations. The following are the four names : 1. Mr. M.A. Jinnah, 2. Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, 3. Nawabzada Liqat Ali Khan and 4, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. "

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(A copy of the resolution passed by the Subjects Committee to be placed before the All-India Muslim League Legislators' Convention on April 9, 1946, is enclosed with the letter).

SECRETARY OF STATE TO LEAD

Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence to the President of the Congress, dated 29th April, 1946 :-

"Thank you for your letter of 28th April. The Cabinet Delegation are very glad to know that the Congress agree to enter the joint discussion with representatives of the Muslim League and ourselves.

"We have taken note of the views you have expressed on behalf of the Working Committee of the Congress. These appear to deal with matters which can be discussed at the Conference for we have never contemplated that acceptance by Congress and the Muslim League of our invitation would imply, as a preliminary condition, full approval by them of the terms set out in my letter. These terms are ^{our} ~~ent~~ proposed basis for a settlement, and what we have asked the Congress Working Committee to do is to agree to send its representatives to meet ourselves and representatives of the Muslim League in order to discuss it.

"Assuming that the Muslim League, whose reply we expect to receive in the course of the afternoon, also accept our invitation, we propose that these discussions should be held at Simla, and intend to move there ourselves on Wednesday next. We hope that you will be able to arrange for the Congress representatives to be in Simla in time to open the discussions on the morning of Thursday, May second."

SECRETARY OF STATE TO JINNAH

Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence to the President of the Muslim League, dated 29th April, 1946 :-

Sunday, May 19~~55~~1946.

"Thank you for your letter of the 29th April. The Cabinet Delegation are very glad to know that the Muslim League agree to enter the joint discussion with the representatives of the Congress and ourselves. I am glad to say I have received a letter from the President of the Congress to say that they are also willing to participate in the proposed discussions and have nominated Maulana Azad, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan as their representatives.

"We have taken note of the resolution of the Muslim League to which you draw our attention. We have never contemplated that acceptance by the Muslim League and the Congress of our invitation would imply, as a preliminary condition, full approval by them of the terms set out in my letter. These terms are our proposed basis for a settlement and what we have asked the Muslim League Working Committee to do is to agree to send its representatives to meet ourselves and representatives of the Congress in order to discuss it.

"We propose that these discussions should be held at Simla and intend to move there ourselves on Wednesday next. We hope that you will be able to arrange for the Muslim League representatives to be in Simla in time to open the discussions on the morning of Thursday, May second."

(Agenda) :

1. Groups of Provinces :-

- (A) Composition.
- (B) Method of deciding Group Subjects.
- (C) Character of Group organisation.

2. Union :-

- (A) Union Subjects.
- (B) Character of Union constitution.
- (C) Finance.

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3. Constitution-making machinery :-

(A) Composition.

(B) Functions.

(1) In respect of Union.

(2) In respect of ~~Groups~~ Groups.

(3) In respect of Provinces.

AZAD TO SECRETARY TO STATE

Letter from the President of Congress to Lord P^eathick-Lawrence dated 6th May, 1946 :-

"My colleagues and I followed with care the proceedings of the Conference yesterday and tried to understand what our conversations were leading up to. I confess to feeling somewhat mystified and disturbed at the vagueness of our talks and some of the assumption/underlying them. While we would like to associate ourselves with every effort to explore ways and means of finding a basis for agreement, we must not deceive ourselves, the Cabinet Mission or the representatives of the Muslim League into the belief that the way the Conference has so far proceeded furnishes hope of success. Our general approach to the questions before us was stated briefly in my letter to you of April 28th. We find that this approach has been largely ignored and a ~~contrary~~ ^{contrary} method has been followed. We realise that some assumptions have to be made in the early stages as otherwise there can be no progress. But assumptions which ignore or run contrary to fundamental issues are likely to lead to misunderstandings during the later stages.

"In my letter of April 28th, I stated that the basic issue before us was that of Indian Independence and the consequent withdrawal of the British Army from India, for there can be no independence so long as there is a foreign army on India soil. We stand for the Independence of the whole of India now and not in the distant or near future. Other matters are subsidiary to this and can be fitly discussed and decided by

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the Constituent Assembly.

"At the Conference yesterday I referred to this again and we were glad to find that you and your colleagues, as well as the other members of the Conference accepted Indian Independence as the basis of our talks. It was stated by you that the Constituent Assembly would finally decide about the ^{nexus} ~~parts~~ or other relationship that might be established between a Free India and England. While this is perfectly true, it does not affect the position now, and that is the acceptance of Indian Independence now.

"If that is so then certain consequences inevitably follow. We felt yesterday that there was no appreciation of these consequences. A Constituent Assembly is not going to decide the question of Independence; that question must be and, we take it, has been decided now. That Assembly will represent the will of the free Indian nation and give effect to it. It is not going to be bound by any previous arrangement. It has to be preceded by a Provisional Government which must function, as far as possible, as a Government of Free India, and which should undertake to make all arrangements for the transitional period.

"SUB-FEDERATION" OPPOSED

"In our discussion/yesterday^s repeated references were made to "Groups" of provinces functioning together, and it was even suggested that such a Group would have an executive and legislative machinery. This method of grouping has not so far been discussed by us but still our talks seemed to presume all this. I should like to make it very clear that we are entirely opposed to any executive or legislative machinery for a group of provinces or units of the Federation. That will be, sub-federation, if not something more, and we have already told you that we do not accept this. It would result in creating three layers of executive and legislative bodies, an arrangement which will be cumbersome, static and disjointed, leading to continuous friction. We are not aware of any such arrangement in any country.

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"We are emphatically of opinion that it is not open to the Conference to entertain any suggestions for a division of India. If this is to come, it should come through the Constituent Assembly free from any influence of the present governing power.

PARITY UNACCEPTABLE

"Another point we wish to make clear is that we do not accept the proposal for parity as between groups in regard to the Executive or Legislature. We realise that everything possible should be done to remove fears and suspicions from the mind of every group and community. But the way to do this is not by unreal methods which go against the basic principles of democracy on which we hope to build up our Constitution."

SECY. OF STATE TO ALIAS & JINNAH

Letter from Lord Pethick Lawrence to the Presidents of the Muslim League and the Congress, dated 8th May, 1946.

"My colleagues and I have been thinking over the best method of laying before the Conference what in our judgment seems the most likely basis of agreement as shown by the deliberations so far.

"We have come to the conclusion that it will be for the convenience of the parties if we commit this to writing and send them confidential copies before the Conference meets again.

"We hope to be in a position to let you have this in the course of the morning. But as this will give you too short a time to study it adequately before the proposed resumption of the Conference at three o'clock this afternoon ^{you will agree} I feel sure that / that the meeting be postponed until the same hour (3 o'clock) to-morrow afternoon, Thursday, 9th May and I hope that you will concur in this change of time which we are convinced

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is in the interests of all parties."

Letter from the Private Secretary to Lord Pethick Lawrence to the Presidents of the Congress and the Muslim League, dated 8th May, 1946.

"With reference to the Secretary of State's letter to you this morning the Cabinet delegation with me to send to you the enclosed document which is the paper to which the Secretary of State referred. The Delegation propose that this paper should be discussed at the next meeting to be held on Thursday afternoon at 3 P.M. if that is agreeable to the Congress/Muslim League delegates."

SUGGESTED POINTS FOR AGREEMENT

Enclosure with letter of 8th May suggested points for agreement between the representatives of Congress and the Muslim League :-

1. There shall be an All-India Union Government with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights and having the necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances required for these subjects.

2. All the remaining powers shall vest in provinces.

3. Groups of provinces may be formed and such groups may determine the provincial subjects which they decide. The groups may set up their own executives and legislatures.

4. The Legislature of the Union shall be composed of equal proportions from the Muslim-majority provinces and from the Hindu-majority provinces whether or not these or any of them have formed themselves into groups ; together with representatives of the States.

5. The Government of the Union shall be constituted in the same proportion as the Legislature.

6. The constitutions of the Union and the groups (if any) shall contain a provision whereby any province can by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitutions after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

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For the purpose of such reconsideration a body shall be constituted on the same basis as the original Constituent Assembly and with the same provisions as to voting and shall have power to amend the constitution in any way decided upon .

7. The constitution-making machinery to arrive at a constitution on the above basis shall be as follows :-

A. Representatives shall be elected from each Provincial Assembly in portion to the strengths of the various parties in that Assembly on the basis of 1/10th of their numbers.

B. Representatives shall be invited from the States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

C. The Constituent Assembly so formed shall meet at the earliest date possible in New Delhi.

D. After its preliminary meeting at which the general order of business will be settled it will divide into three sections, one section representing the Hindu-majority provinces, one section representing the Muslim-majority provinces and one representing the States.

E. The first two sections will then meet separately to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and if they wish, a group constitution.

F. When these have been settled it will be open to any province to decide to opt out of its original group and into the other group or to remain outside any group.

G. Thereafter the three bodies will meet together to settle the constitution for the Union on the lines agreed in paragraphs 1 to 7 above.

H. No major point in the Union constitutions which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Assembly unless a majority of both the two major communities vote in its favour.

8. The Viceroy shall forthwith call together the above constitution-making machinery which shall be governed by the

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provisions stated in paragraph 8 above.

JINNAH PRESENTS NEW PROPOSALS

Letter from the President of the Muslim League to Lord Pethick Lawrence, dated 8th May, 1946.

"I have now received the letter of your Private Secretary, dated 8th May, 1946, and the enclosed document to which you had referred in your earlier letter of 8th May, 1946. It is proposed by you that this "paper" be discussed at the next meeting of the Conference to be held on Thursday afternoon at 3 P.M. if this is agreeable to the Muslim League delegation.

"Your proposal embodied in your letter of 27th April, 1946 runs as follows :-

"A Union Government dealing with the following subjects :- Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. There will be two groups of provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces dealing with all other subjects which the provinces in the respective groups desire to be dealt with in common. The Provincial Governments will deal with all other subjects and will have all residuary sovereign rights."

This matter was to be discussed at Simla and we agreed to attend the Conference on Sunday, 5th May 1946, on the terms of my letter, dated 28th April, 1946.

You were good enough to explain your formula and then after hours of discussion on the 5th and 6th of May, the Congress finally and definitely turned down the proposed Union confined only to three subjects even with power to levy contribution for financing the Union.

Next, your formula clearly envisaged an agreement precedent between the Congress and the Muslim League with regard to the grouping of Muslim and Hindu provinces and the formation of two federations of the grouped provinces and it followed that there must be two constitution-making

machineries. It was on that basis that some kind of Union was suggested in your formula confined only to three subjects and our approval was sought in order to put into this skeleton blood and flesh. This proposal was also categorically turned down by the Congress and the meeting had to be adjourned for the Mission to consider the matter further as to what steps they may take in the matter.

"And now the new enclosed document has been sent to us with a view that "this paper should be discussed at the next meeting to be held on Thursday afternoon at 3 P.M.". The heading of the paper is "suggested points for agreement between the representatives of Congress and the Muslim League". By whom are they suggested, it is not made clear.

"FUNDAMENTAL DEPARTURE"

"We are of the opinion that the new suggested points for agreement are a fundamental departure from the original formula embodied in your letter of 27th April, which was rejected by the Congress.

"To mention some of the important points we are now asked to agree that there should be one All-India Union Government in terms of paragraphs 1-7 of this paper, which adds one more subject to be vested in the Union Government, i.e. "fundamental rights" and it is not made clear whether the Union Government and Legislature will have power or not to obtain for itself the finances by means of taxation.

"In the new "suggestions" the question of grouping of provinces is left exactly as the Congress spokesmen desired in the course of discussions that have taken place hitherto, and is totally different from your original formula.

"That there should be a single constitution-making body, we can never agree to nor can we agree to the method of formation of constitution-making machineries suggested in the paper.

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"There are many other objectionable features contained in the suggestions which we have not dealt with as we are only dealing with the main points arising out of this paper. In these circumstances, we think, no useful purpose will be served to discuss this paper, as it is a complete departure from your original formula, unless after what we have said above you still desire us to discuss it in the Conference itself to-morrow.

SICRY. OF STAIN'S REPLY

Letter from Lord Patrick-Lawrence to the President of the Muslim League, dated 9th May, 1946 :-

" I have to acknowledge your letter of yesterday which I have shown to my colleagues. In it you raise a number of issues to which I propose to reply in order.

1. You claim that Congress "finally and definitely ~~turned~~ ^{turned} down the proposed Union confined only to three subjects even with power to levy contribution for financing the "Union". This statement is not in accord with my recollection of what took place in the Conference room. It is true that the Congress representatives expressed their view that the limitation was too narrow and argued further that even so limited it necessarily included certain ancillary matters. Up to a point you recognised that there ~~was~~ was some force in the argument because you agreed, as I understood, that some power to obtain the necessary finance must be given. There was no final decision on this matter (or of course ^{on} any other) .

2. Next you claim, if I understand you alright, that our reference to the formation of B groups is at variance with the formula in our invitation. I am afraid I cannot accept this view. It is of course a slightly amplified form because it specifies the manner in which the provinces can decide as to joining any particular group. This amplified form is put forward

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by us as a reasonable compromise between the views of the Muslim League and those originally expressed by Congress against grouping at all.

3. You further take exception to the machinery that we suggest should be set up for making the constitution. I would point out to you however that you yourself in explaining how your two constitution-making bodies would work agreed on Tuesday last in the Conference that they would have to join together in the end to decide the constitution of the Union and you took no exception to their having a preliminary session in common to decide procedure. What we are proposing is in fact precisely the same thing expressed in different words. I am therefore quite at a loss to understand what you have in mind when you use the words.

"This proposal was also categorically turned down by the Congress"

4. In your next succeeding paragraph you ask ^{who} ~~then~~ it is that makes the suggestions that are contained in the document I sent you. The answer is the Cabinet Mission and His Excellency the Viceroy who makes them in our endeavour to bridge the gap between the view points of the Congress and the Muslim League.

5. You next take exception to our departing from the original mind you that in accepting my original invitation formula in my ~~accepting my original~~ invitation. Neither the Muslim League nor the Congress bound itself to accept in full the original formula, and in a reply of April 29th I wrote these words :-

"We have never contemplated that acceptance by the Muslim League and the Congress of our invitation would imply as a preliminary condition for approval by them of the terms set out in my letter. These terms are our proposed basis for a settlement and what we have asked the Muslim League Working Committee

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to do, is to agree to send its representatives to meet ourselves and representatives of the Congress in order to discuss it."

Indeed this is the only sensible attitude because the object of all our discussions is to explore every conceivable possibility of reaching agreement.

6. "Fundamental Rights" were included by us in our suggestions for addition to the list of Union subjects because it seemed to us that it would be of benefit both to the large communities and to the small minorities for them to be put in and, accordingly, to be worthy of consideration in our Conference. As to finance, it will of course be quite open to discuss in the Conference the precise significance of the inclusion of this word in its context.

7. Your two following paragraphs are mainly a recapitulation of your previous arguments and have been already dealt with above. From your last paragraph I understand that though you do not consider in the circumstances that any good purpose would be served by the attendance of the Muslim League delegation at the Conference fixed for this afternoon, you are willing to come if we express a desire that you should do so. My colleagues and I wish to obtain the views of both parties on the document submitted and, therefore, would be glad to see you at the conference.

***** JUL 21 1964 *****

Letter from the President of the Congress to Lord Pethick
Lawrence, dated 24th May, 1946 :r

"My colleagues and I have given the most careful consideration to the memorandum sent by you yesterday suggesting various points of agreement. On the 28th April I sent you a letter in which I explained briefly the Congress view-point in regard to certain "Fundamental Principles" mentioned in your letter of 27th April. After the first day of the Conference on May 6th I wrote to you again to avoid any possible misunderstanding regarding the issues being discussed in the Conference.

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"I now find from your memorandum that some of your suggestions are entirely opposed to our views and to the views repeatedly declared by the Congress. We are thus placed in a difficult position. It has been and is our desire to explore every avenue for a settlement and a change-over in India by consent, and for this purpose we are prepared to go far. But there are obvious limits beyond which we cannot go if we are convinced that this would be injurious to the people of India and to India's progress as a free nation.

"In my previous letters I have laid stress on the necessity of having a strong and organic Federal Union. I have also stated that we do not approve of sub-federations or **grouping** of provinces in the manner suggested, and are wholly opposed to parity in Executives or Legislatures as between wholly unequal groups. We do not wish to come in the way of provinces or other units cooperating together, if they so choose, but this must be ^{entirely} ~~entirely~~ official.

ONLY REASONABLE COURSE

"The proposals you have put forward are meant, we presume to limit the free discretion of the Constituent Assembly. We do not see how this can be done. We are at present concerned with one important aspect of a larger problem. Any decision on this aspect taken now might well conflict with the decisions we, or the Constituent Assembly, might want to take on other aspects.

"The only reasonable course appears to us is to have a Constituent Assembly with perfect freedom to draw up its constitution, with certain reservations to protect the rights of minorities. Thus we may agree that any major communal issue must be settled by consent of the parties concerned, ^{or} ~~or~~ where such consent is not obtained, by arbitration.

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From the proposals you have sent us (8 D.E.F.G.) it would appear that two or three separate constitutions might emerge for separate groups, joined together by a flimsy common super-structure left to the mercy of the three disjoined groups.

"There is also compulsion in the early stages for a province to join a particular group whether it wants to or not. Thus why should the Frontier Province, which is clearly a Congress province, be compelled to join any group hostile to the Congress ?

U

"We realise that in dealing with human beings, as individuals or groups, many considerations have to be borne in mind besides logic and reason. But logic and reason cannot be ignored altogether, and unreason and injustice are dangerous companions at any time and, more especially, when we are building for the future of hundreds of millions of human beings.

UNION FINANCE

I shall now deal with some of the points in your memorandum and make some suggestions in regard to them.

No. 1. We note that you have provided for the Union to have necessary powers to obtain for itself the finance it requires for the subjects it deals with. We think it should be clearly stated that the Federal Union must have power to raise revenues in its own right. Further that currency and customs must in any event be included in the Union subjects, as well as such other subjects as on closer scrutiny may be found to be intimately allied to them. One other subject is an essential and inevitable Union subject and that is planning. Planning can only be done effectively at the Centre, through the Provinces or units which give effect to it in their respective areas.

The Union must also have power to take remedial action in cases of breakdown of the Constitution and in grave public emergencies.

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Nos. 5 and 6 - We are entirely opposed to the proposed parity, both in the executive and legislature, as between wholly unequal groups. This is unfair and will lead to trouble. Such a provision contains in itself the seed of conflict and the destruction of free growth. If there is no agreement on this or any similar matter, we are prepared to leave it to arbitration.

No. 7 - We are prepared to accept the suggestion that provision be made for a reconsideration of the Constitution after ten years. Indeed, the Constitution will necessarily provide the machinery for the revision at any time.

The second clause lays down that reconsideration should be done by body constituted on the same basis as the Constituent Assembly. This present provision is intended to meet an emergency. We expect that ~~the~~ ^{the} Constitution for India will be based on adult suffrage. Ten years hence India is not likely to be satisfied with anything less than adult suffrage to express its mind on all grave issues.

ELECTION METHOD

No. 8+-A. We would suggest that the just and proper method of elections, fair to all parties, is the method ^{of} ~~of~~ proportional representation by single transferable vote.

It might be remembered that the present basis of election for the provincial assemblies is strongly weighed in favour of the minorities.

The proportion of one-tenth appears to be too small and will limit the numbers of the Constituent Assembly too much. Probably the number would not exceed two hundred. In the vitally important ^{tasks} ~~tasks~~ the Assembly will have to face, it should have larger numbers. We suggest that at least one-fifth of the total membership of the provincial Assemblies should be elected for the Constituent Assembly.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

No. 8 :-B. This clause is vague and requires elucidation. But for the present we are not going into further details.

GROUPS PROCEDURE

No. 8 :-D.E.F.G. I have already referred to these clauses. We think that both the formation of these groups and the procedure suggested are worn and undesirable. We do not wish to rule out the formation of the groups if the provinces so desire. But this subject must be left open for decision by the Constituent Assembly. The drafting and settling of the constitution should begin with the Federal Union. This should contain common and uniform provisions for the provinces and other units. The provinces may then add to these.

No. 8-H. In the circumstances existing to-day we are prepared to accept some such clause. In case of disagreement the matter should be referred to arbitration.

I have pointed out above some of the obvious defects as we see them ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the proposals contained in your memorandum. If these are remedied, as suggested by us, we might be in a position to recommend their acceptance by the Congress. But as drafted in the memorandum sent to us, I regret that we are unable to accept them.

On the whole, therefore, if the suggestions are intended to have a binding effect, with all the will in the world to have an agreement with the League, we must repudiate most of them. Let us not run into any evil greater than the one all of ~~us~~ three parties should seek to avoid.

If an agreement honourable to both the parties and favourable to the growth of free and united India cannot be achieved we ~~would~~ suggest that an interim Provisional Government responsible to the elected members of the Central Assembly be formed at once and the matters in dispute concerning the Constituent Assembly between the Congress and the League be referred to an independent tribunal.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

After a proposal by Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru that an umpire should be appointed to settle matters of difference between the parties the conference, understanding that there was a likelihood of agreement on an umpire between the parties, was adjourned and the following correspondence passed between the parties.

NEHRU TO JINNAH

Letter from Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru to the President of the Muslim League dated 10th May, 1946.

"In accordance with our decision yesterday at the conference my colleagues have given a good deal of thought to the choice of a suitable umpire. We have felt that it would probably be desirable to exclude Englishmen, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The field is thus limited. Nevertheless we have drawn up a considerable list from which a choice can be made, I presume that you have also, in consultation with your executive prepared a list of possible umpires. Would you like these two lists to be considered by us, that is, by you and me ? If so, we can fix up a meeting for the purpose, After we have met, our recommendation can be considered by the eight of us, that is, the four representatives of the Congress and the four representatives of the Muslim League, and a final choice can be made, which we can place before the conference when it meets to-morrow.

JINNAH TO NEHRU

Letter from the President of the Muslim League to Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru, dated May 10th, 1946 :-

Received your letter of 10th May at 6 P.M.

At yesterday's meeting between you and me at the Viceregal Lodge, we discussed several points besides the fixing of an umpire. After a short discussion, we came to the conclusion that we will further examine your proposal made by you at the conference yesterday, with all its implications after your and my consulting our respective colleagues.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

I shall be glad to meet you to consider the various aspects of your proposal any time that may suit you to-morrow morning after 10 O'clock.

NEHRU REPLIES

Letter from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the President of the Muslim League dated May 11, 1946 :

Your letter of May 10 reached me at 10 last night.

During the talk we had at Viceregal Lodge, you referred to various matters besides the choice of an umpire and I gave you my reactions in regard to them but I was under the impression that the ^oproposal to have an umpire had been agreed to and our next business was to suggest names. Indeed it was when some such agreement was reached in the conference that we had our talk. My colleagues have proceeded on this basis and prepared a list of suitable names. The conference will expect us to tell them this afternoon the name of the umpire we fix upon, or at any rate to place before them suggestions in this behalf.

The chief implication in having an umpire is to agree to accept his final decisions. We agree to this. We suggest that we might start with this and report accordingly to the conference.

As suggested by you, I shall come over to your place of residence at about 10-30 this morning.

JINNAH'S REPLY

Letter from the President of the Muslim League to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dated May 11, 1946.

I am in receipt of your letter of 11th May, 1946.

During the talk we had at the Viceregal Lodge which lasted for about fifteen or twenty minutes, I pointed out various aspects and implications of your proposal and we had a discussion for a little while, but no agreement was arrived at between you and me on any point except that at your suggestion that you consult your colleagues and I should do likewise we adjourned to meet again the next day to further discuss the matter.

Sunday, May 19, 1946.

I shall be glad to meet you at ten-thirty this morning for a further talk.

LEAGUE MEMORANDUM

Memorandum by the President of the Muslim League embodying minimum demands by way of an offer, in accordance with the Conference decision, dated 12th May, 1946.

(Copies sent to the Cabinet Delegation and the Congress).

Principles to be agreed to as our offer :

1. The six Muslim Provinces (Punjab, N.W.F.P. Beluchistan, Sind, Bengal and Assam) shall be grouped together as one group and will deal with all other subjects and matters except Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communication necessary for defence, which may be dealt with by the constitution-making bodies of the two groups of Provinces - Muslim provinces (herein after-named Pakistan Group) and Hindu provinces - sitting together.

2. There shall be a separate constitution making body for the six Muslim provinces named above, which will frame constitutions for the Group and the provinces in the Group and will determine the list of subjects that shall be Provincial and Central (of the Pakistan Federation^e) with residuary sovereign powers vesting in the provinces.

3. The method of election of the representatives to the constitution-making body will be such as would secure proper representation to the various communities in proportion to their population in each province of the Pakistan group.

4. After the constitutions of the Pakistan Federal Government^e and the provinces are finally framed by the constitution-making body. It will be open to any province of the ^{group}~~group~~ to decide to opt out of its group, provided the wishes of the people of that province are ascertained by a referendum to opt out or not.

5. It must be open to discussion in the joint constitution-making body as to whether the Union will have a legislature or not. The method of providing the Union with finance should also be left for the decision of the joint meeting of the two constitution-making

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bodies, but in no event shall it be by means of taxation.

6. There should be parity of representation between the two groups of provinces in the Union executive and the legislature, if any.

7. No "major point in the constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed in the joint constitution-making body, unless the majority of the members of the constitution-making body of the Hindu provinces and the majority of the members of the constitution-making body of the Pakistan group, present and voting are separately in its favour.

8. No decision, legislative executive or administrative shall be taken by the Union in regard to any matter of controversial nature except by a majority of three-fourths.

9. In group and provincial constitutions fundamental rights and safeguards concerning religion, culture and other matters affecting communities will be provided for.

10. The constitution of the Union shall contain a provision whereby any province can by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for reconsideration of the terms of the constitution, and will have the liberty to secede from the Union at any time after an initial period of ten years.

These are the principles of our offer for a peaceful and amicable settlement and this offer stands in its entirety and all matters mentioned herein are interdependent.

CONGRESS SUGGESTIONS

Points suggested on behalf of the Congress as a basis for agreement, 12th May, 1946.

1. The Constituent Assembly to be formed as follows :-

(i) Representatives shall be elected by each Provincial Assembly by proportional representation (single transferable vote). The number so elected should be one-fifth of the number of members of the Assembly or others.

(ii) Representatives from the States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

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How these representatives are to be chosen is to be considered later.

2. The Constituent Assembly shall draw up a constitution for the Fed^eral Union. This shall consist of an All-India Federal Government and Legislature dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights, Currency, Customs and Planning, as well as such other subjects as, on closer scrutiny, may be found to be intimately allied to them. The Fed^eral Union will have necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances it requires for these subjects and the power to raise revenues in its own right. The Union must also have power to take remedial action in cases of breakdown of the constitution and in grave public emergencies.

3. All the remaining powers will vest in the provinces or units.

4. Groups of provinces may be formed and such Groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.-(A.)

5. After the Constituent Assembly has decided the constitution for the All-India Federal Union as laid down in paragraph two above, the representatives of the provinces may form groups to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and, if they wish, a group constitution.

6. No major point in the All-India Federal Constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Constituent Assembly unless a majority of the members of the community or communities connected present in Assembly and voting are separately in its favour provided that in case there is no agreement on any such issue it will be referred to arbitration. In case of doubt as to whether any point is a major communal issue the Speaker will decide, or, if so desired., it may be referred to the Federal Court.

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7. In the event of a dispute arising in the process of constitution-making the specific issue shall be referred to arbitration.

8. The constitution should provide machinery for its revision at any time subject to such checks as may be devised. ~~If so desired~~ ~~and~~. If so desired, it may be specifically stated that this whole constitution ~~existing~~ may be reconsidered after ten years.

Note by the Congress on the principles to be agreed upon as suggested on behalf of the Muslim League dated 12th May, 1946.

The approach of the Muslim League is so different from that of the Congress in regard to these matters that it is a little difficult to deal with each point separately without reference to the rest. The picture as envisaged by the Congress is briefly given in a separate note. From consideration of this note and the Muslim League's proposals the difficulties and the possible agreement will become obvious.

The Muslim League's proposals are dealt with below briefly :-

(1) We suggest that the proper procedure is for one constitution-making body or one Constituent Assembly to meet for the whole of India and later for Groups to be formed if so desired by the provinces concerned the matter should be left to the provinces and if they wish to function as a Group they are at liberty to do so and to frame their own constitution for the purpose.

In any event ~~as~~ ~~am~~ has obviously no place in the group mentioned, and the North-West Frontier Province, as the election show is not in favour of this proposal.

(2) We have agreed to residuary powers, apart from the Central subjects, vesting in the provinces. They can make such use of them as they like and, as has been stated above *ultimate nature of such group* function as a group. ~~may be~~ cannot be determined at this stage and should be left to the representatives of the provinces concerned.

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(3) We have suggested that the most suitable method of election would be by single transferable vote. This would give proper representation to the various communities in proportion to their present representation in the Legislatures. If the population proportion is taken, we have no particular question, but this would lead to difficulties in all the provinces where there is weightage in favour of certain communities. The principle approved of would necessarily apply to all the provinces.

(4) There is no necessity for opting out of a province from its group as the previous consent of the provinces is necessary for joining the Group.

(5) We consider it essential that the Federal Union should have a legislature. We also consider it essential that the Union should have power to raise its own revenue.

(6 and 7). We are entirely opposed to parity of representation as between groups of provinces in the Union executive or legislature. We think that the provision to the effect that no major communal issue in the union constitution shall be deemed to be passed by the constituent assembly unless a majority of the members of the community or communities concerned present and voting in the constituent assembly are separately in its favour is a sufficient and ample safeguard of all minorities. We have suggested something wider and including all communities than has been proposed elsewhere; this may give rise to some difficulties ^{which} can be got over by reference to arbitration. We are prepared to consider the method of giving effect to this principle so as to make it more feasible.

(8) This proposal is so sweeping in its nature that no Government or legislature can function at all. Once we have safeguarded major communal issues other matters, whether controversial or not, require no safeguard. This will simply mean safeguarding vested interests of all kinds and preventing progress, or indeed any movement in any direction.

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We, therefore, entirely disapprove of it.

(9) We are entirely agreeable to the inclusion of fundamental rights and safeguards concerning religion, culture and like matters in the constitution. We suggest that the proper place for this is the All-India Federal Union^e constitution. There should be uniformity in regard to these fundamental rights all over India.

(10) The constitution of the Union will inevitably contain provision for its full reconsideration at the end of ten years. The matter will be open then for a complete reconsideration. Though it is implied, we would avoid reference to secession as we do not wish to encourage this idea.

(Concluded)

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Sunday, May 19, 1946.

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(10) The constitution of the Union will inevitably contain provision for its full reconsideration at the end of ten years. The matter will be open then for a complete reconsideration. Though it is implied, we would avoid reference to secession as we do not wish to encourage this idea.

(Concluded)

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IDEA OF NATIONAL LANGUAGE

GANDHIJI'S BIGGEST GIFT

Azad on Shame Of Talking in Borrowed
T o n g u e

AHMEDABAD, May 26.

"Gandhiji has given many things to India, but probably very few people realise that one of the biggest things that she has received at his hands is the idea of national language", says Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in an article in to-day's "Harijan" under the caption, "National Language of India".

Maulana Azad adds: " Although she (India) could boast of several languages there was none which was universally accepted as her national language.

"English came to us through the government but soon it so dominated the country that it became the medium for higher education and social intercourse among the educated class. They were ashamed to speak in their national language and considered it a mark of honour and distinction to speak in English only on all occasions. Even in their private conversations they could not put away their English. A new political awakening came over the country towards the close of the last century when the Indian National Congress was founded. The sessions of the Congress were held to make the demands and decisions of the nation heard to the world. But even this voice was not in the national tongue. We wanted to proclaim to England that India was for Indians and for none other. But to say that we could find no language of our own and were content to express our longing in a borrowed tongue.

"The entry of Gandhiji in the political field spelt a complete revolution - the country began to speak in its own tongues. To speak in the national tongue ceased to be regarded as a shame. Gandhiji reminded the people that the thing to be ashamed of was

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to forget one's own tongue. He toured all over the country in 1920-21 and delivered hundreds of speeches but without exception they were in Hindustani.

"When I was under detention at Ranchi during the great war I remember having read in the newspaper the report of the war conference which Lord Chelmsford had summoned in 1917. Gandhiji participated in it but he had made it a condition that he would speak in Hindustani. At that time this was regarded by the press as a strange innovation. But the innovation was soon to become the common thing in the country and to-day we see that Hindustani has taken the place that English held twenty-five years ago." - (A.P.).

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Saturday, June 22, 1946.

CONGRESS SUPPORT FOR RLY-MEN'S DEMANDS

Azad's Assurance : Background Of Board-Federation²
Agreement

NEW DELHI, June 21.

"I congratulate the General Council of the All India Railwaymen's Federation on their decision to call off the general strike on railways", says Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in a statement.

He adds: " I know that rail aymen have worked under very difficult conditions and have many grievances. I also know that they have always been willing to submit the dispute to arbitration and it was the Railway Board which till recently refused.

"In view of the gravity of the food situation and the possibility of far reaching political changes it is imperative to maintain normal functioning of the railways. I am glad that Board have now adopted a more conciliatory attitude. It is true that railwaymen have not gained all they wanted but they have acted wisely and won the sympathy of the public by their decision to avoid the strike. I can assure them that their grievances and demands will be sympathetically considered by any government over which the Congress has influence". ...

- (A.P.)

Saturday, June 22, 1946.

" SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS INEVITABLE "

Azad on Nehru's Arrest :
Warning to Kashmir Govt.

NEW DELHI, June 21.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President, in a statement ~~on~~ Pandit Nehru's arrest says that he is trying to establish contact with Pandit Nehru and hopes that an amicable solution may yet be found : "If this does not happen", says the Congress President, "far-reaching and serious repercussions are inevitable."

The following is the text of the statement :

"The manner in which the Kashmir Government has denied to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru entry into the State has caused indignation all over India. I have received numerous messages, telegrams and telephone calls from individuals and organisations in Kashmir, Punjab and elsewhere expressing their resentment and declaring their readiness to proceed to Kashmir to defy the order of the State authorities. I appreciate the spirit of these offers but at the same time request them to await further instructions. It is well-known that Pandit Nehru was going to Kashmir only for a day to see things for himself, to meet Sheikh Abdullah and arrange for his defence. The provocation by the action of the State authorities is undoubtedly great and the Maharaja of Kashmir and his advisers have committed a grievous blunder in acting in the way they have done. We should however act with deliberation however great the provocation may be. I am trying to establish contact with Pandit Nehru and hope that an amicable solution may yet be found. If this does not happen far-reaching and serious repercussions are inevitable. " - (A.P.)

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FREEDOM & UNITY OF INDIA

Congress Stand Vindicated: Azad Reviews
3 Months' Negotiations

NEW DELHI, June 26.

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a 1000 word review of the last three months' negotiations with the Cabinet Mission says :

"In our prolonged negotiations with the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy my colleagues and I have throughout been guided by one governing principle. It was the achievement of Indian independence and the solution of all outstanding problems by methods of peaceful negotiations.

"Such methods have both their advantages and their limitations. Independence achieved through violence and ~~conflict~~ ~~conflict~~ may be more spectacular but entails endless suffering and bloodshed and leaves behind a heritage of bitterness and hatred.

"Peaceful methods leave no bitter trail but neither are the results so spectacular as in a violent revolution. The present negotiations have therefore to be judged from this standard. Keeping in mind the method chosen and the peculiar nature of our problems, dispassionate observers will be forced to admit that though all our hopes have not been fulfilled, the results mark a decisive forward towards the attainment of our goal. After searching discussion and analysis, this was the conclusion reached by the Congress Working Committee, and they have accordingly accepted the longterm proposals.

"As I have explained in my statement of the 14th April, 1946, the Congress scheme for the solution of India's political and constitutional problem rested upon two fundamental bases.

"The Congress held that in the peculiar circumstances of India, a limited but organic and powerful centre confined to certain basic subjects was inevitable. A unitary Government could no more meet the requirements

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of the case than a division of India into several independent states.

"A second fundamental principle was the recognition of the complete autonomy of the provinces with all residuary powers vested in them. Congress held that the provinces would administer all excepting the basic central subjects. From the nature of the case it would be open to the provinces to delegate to the Centre such/^{other}~~xxxxxx~~ subjects as they chose.

"It is an open secret that the Cabinet Missions's long-term proposals are framed according to the principles laid down in the Congress schemes.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

"A question about the implication of provincial autonomy was raised during the recent Simla Conference. It was asked that if the provinces were fully autonomous, did not two or more of them have the right, if they chose of setting up inter-provincial machinery for administering such subjects as they allocated to it ?

The declared views of the Congress on the question of provincial autonomy did not permit a denial of the force in the contention. My correspondence during the Simla Conference has already been released and given to the public a clear exposition of the Congress views on the question.

"The only novel feature in the Cabinet Mission's scheme is the idea of grouping the provinces into three different sections. As soon as the Constituent Assembly meets, it will, according to the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, divide itself into three committees. Each Committee will be composed of members from provinces in the appropriate section and will together decide whether to form a group or not. Section 15 of the Cabinet Proposals have clearly recognised the rights of provinces to form groups or not. The Cabinet Mission intend that the provinces

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should exercise ^{This} ~~the~~ right at a particular stage.

"The Congress Working Committee hold that ^{statement} ~~[their own statement]~~ whatever the intention of the Cabinet Mission, of 16th May, does not bear such interpretation. They hold that the provinces are fully autonomous and have the right to decide the question at any stage they like. Section 15 and the general spirit of the proposals support the Congress interpretation.

NO COMPULSORY GROUPING

"The provinces have the right to decide either at the very beginning before the Group Constitution has been framed at all or at the end after they have examined the Group Constitution as it has emerged from the Committee of the Constituent Assembly. I am convinced that the Congress interpretation cannot be challenged.

"If a province decides to remain outside the Group from the very beginning, it cannot be compelled to come in.

NO EUROPEAN WEIGHTAGE

"There is the problem of Europeans in Assam and Bengal. The Cabinet Mission's proposals have done away with weightage of representation and have clearly laid down that there is to be one representative for every million of the population. This automatically rules the Europeans out of the picture. Once weightage is discarded, they have no right to any representation at all on the basis of population. It is in the interests of Europeans themselves to refrain from seeking election or participating in the voting. I am confident that the Europeans in Bengal and Assam will act with wisdom and statesmanship. Since the Europeans in Bengal have already decided to refrain from participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, I trust that the Europeans in Assam will follow their example.

DELAY IN PROVISIONAL GOVT.

"It must however be admitted that one grave flaw in this picture is the delay in the formation of a Provisional

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National Government. Such Provisional Government alone can provide the atmosphere in which the Constituent Assembly can function with a sense of full freedom and authority. Their mutual interactions are so intimate that each would suffer in the absence of the other. I earnestly hope that this lacuna in the settlement will be filled and a representative and powerful Provisional Government soon set up.

"In assessing the results of the negotiations we must not forget that the two main objectives of the Congress have been the freedom and the unity of India. The Congress stand has been vindicated on both these points. The constitution-making body will be a purely Indian Assembly elected by Indian votes alone.

"It will have the unfettered right to shape India's future Constitution and decide our relations with the British Commonwealth and the rest of the world. And this sovereign Constituent Assembly will legislate not for a divided but for a united India. All schemes of partition of India have been rejected once and for all. The Union Centre may be limited, but it will be powerful and organic and will integrate into one harmonious whole the many provincial, linguistic and cultural diversities which characterise contemporary India." - (A.P.)

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5 day -
27, 1946.

ASSURANCES TO JINNAH RESENTED

AZAD'S LETTER TO VICEROY

"Working Of Provisional Govt. Rendered Difficult"

In a 1500 word letter written yesterday to the Viceroy, the Congress President has comprehensively dealt with the reasons for the Congress rejecting the Interim Government proposal made by the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission in their statement on June 16.

FULL TEXT OF LETTER

Following is the full text of the letter which the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wrote to Lord Wavell yesterday intimating the Congress Working Committee's rejection of the short-term interim proposal and accepting the long-term plan.

20 Akar Road,
New Delhi,
25th June, 1946.

Dear Lord Wavell,

Ever since the receipt of your statement of June 16th, my Committee have been considering it from day to day and have given long and anxious thought to your proposals and to the invitations you have issued to individuals to form the Provisional National Government. Because of our desire to find some way out of the present most unsatisfactory situation, we have tried our utmost to appreciate your approach and view point. In the course of our conversations we have already pointed out to you our difficulties. Unfortunately these difficulties have been increased by the recent correspondence.

The Congress, as you are aware, is a national organisation including in its fold the members of all religions and communities in India. For more than half a century it has laboured for the freedom of India and for equal rights for all Indians. The link that has brought all these various groups and communities together with ⁱⁿ the fold the Congress in

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the passionate desire for national independence, economic advance and social equality. It is from this point of view that we have to judge every proposal. We hoped that a Provisional National Government would be formed which would give effect in practice to this independence.

POWERS OF PROVISIONAL GOVT.

Appreciating some of your difficulties we did not press for any statutory change introducing independence immediately, but we did expect a 'de facto' change in the character of the Government making for ~~XXXXXX~~ independence in action.

The status and powers of the Provisional Government were thus important.

In our view this was going to be something entirely different from the Viceroy's Executive Council. It was to represent a new outlook, new methods of work and a new psychological approach by India to both domestic and external problems. Your letter dated 30th May, 1946 gave us certain assurances about the status and powers of the Provisional Government. These did not go far enough according to our thinking but we appreciated the friendly tone of that letter and decided to accept the assurances and not to press this particular matter any further.

The important question of the composition of the Provisional Government remained. In this ~~connection~~ we emphasised that we could not **accept** anything in the nature of "parity" even as a temporary expedient and pointed out that the Provisional Government should consist of 15 members to enable the administration of the country to be carried on efficiently and the smaller minorities to be represented in it.

Some mention of names was made and on our part suggestions were put before you informally, including the name of a non-League Muslim.

~~ELECTION OF NAMES~~

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SLECTION OF NAMES

In your statement of June 16th some of the names were made from the provisional list prepared by the Congress. The manner of preparing your list and presenting it as an accomplished fact seemed to us to indicate a wrong approach to the problem. One of the names included had not been previously mentioned at all and was that of a person holding an official position and not known to be associated with any public activity. We have no personal objection to him but we think that the inclusion of such a name particularly without any previous reference or consultation was undesirable and indicated a wrong approach to the problem.

Then again a name from our list was excluded and in his place another of our colleagues was put in, but as you have said that this can be rectified, I need not say more about.

INCLUSION OF NATIONALIST MUSLIM

One outstanding feature of the list was the non-inclusion of any Nationalist Muslim to take the place of one of the Congress names on the list. We felt that no one could possibly object to our changing the name of one of our own men. Indeed when I had drawn your attention to the fact that among the Muslim League nominees was included the name of a person who had actually lost in the recent election in the Frontier Province and whose name we felt had been placed there for political reasons, you wrote to me as follows : "I am afraid that I cannot accept the right of the Congress to object to names put forward by the Muslim League, any more than it would accept similar objections from the other side. The test must be that of ability" But before we could make our suggestion I received your letter of the 22nd June which surprised us greatly. You had written this letter on the basis of some Press reports. You told us that the Cabinet Mission and you were not prepared to accept a request for the ~~inclusion~~

June 27, 1946

among the representatives of the Congress
inclusion of a Muslim chosen by the Congress in the Interim
Government.

This seemed to us an extraordinary decision.
It was in direct opposition to your own statement quoted
above. It meant that the Congress could not freely choose
even its own nominees.

The fact that this was not to be taken as a
precedent made hardly any difference. Even a temporary
departure from such a vital principle could not be accepted
by us at any time or place and in any circumstances.

In your letter of the 21st June you gave certain
questions framed by Mr. Jinnah in his letter dated 19th
June and your replies to them. We have not seen Mr. Jinnah's
letter. In question 3 reference is made to "represent-
ation of the four minorities viz., the Scheduled Castes, the
Sikhs, the Indian Christians and the Parsees" and it is asked
as to "who will fill in vacancies caused in these groups
and whether in filling up the vacancies the leader of the
Muslim League will be consulted and his consent obtained."

AREN'T SCHEDULED CASTES HINDUS ?

In your answer you say, "If any vacancy occurs
among the seats at present allotted to representatives
of the minorities, I shall naturally consult both the main
parties before filling it". Mr. Jinnah has thus included
the Scheduled Castes among the minorities and presumably you
have agreed with this view. So far as we have concerned
we repudiate this view and consider the Scheduled castes as
integral parts of Hindu society. You also, in your letter
of June 15th, treated the Scheduled Castes as Hindus.

You pointed out that in your proposal there was
no "parity" either between Hindus and Muslims or between
the Congress and the Muslim League inasmuch as there were
to be 6 Hindus belonging to the Congress as against
5 Muslims belonging to the League. One of the 6 Hindus
belonged to the Scheduled Castes.

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We are in any case not agreeable to the leader of a party, which claims to represent a community which is a minority, interfering with the selection of names either of the Scheduled Castes, whose representation you counted as falling within the Congress quota or with the selection of representatives of the minorities mentioned.

In Question 4 the Scheduled Castes are ~~g~~ again referred to as a minority and it is asked whether the proportion of members of the Government community-wise as provided in the proposals will be maintained. Your answer is that the proportion will not be changed without agreement of the two major~~y~~ parties. Here again one communal group functioning admittedly as such as ~~as~~ given a power to veto changes in other groups with which it has no concern.

We may desire, if opportunity offers itself, to increase representation when it is possible, to an other minority, for example Anglo Indians. All this would depend on the consent of the Muslim League. We cannot agree to this.

We may add that your answers restrict the Congress representation to Caste Hindus and make it equal to that of the League.

DECISION ON MAJOR COMMUNAL ISSUE

Finally you state in answer to Question 5 that "no decision of a major communal Issue could be taken by the Interim Government if the majority of either of the main parties were opposed to it." You further say that you had pointed this out to the Congress President and he had agreed that the Congress appreciated this point. In this connection I desire to point out that we had accepted this principles for the longterm arrangement in the Union Legislature and it could possible be applied to the Provisional Government if it was responsible to the Legislature and was composed of representatives on the population basis of major

June 27, 1946

communities.

It could not be applied to the Provisional Government formed ~~XXXXXX~~ on a different basis altogether. It was pointed out by us in my letter of the 18th June 1946 that it would make administration impossible and deadlocks a certainty. Even in the question as framed by Mr. Jinnah it is stated that "in view of substitution of 14 now proposed for the original 12" no major communal issues should be decided if the majority of the Muslim members are opposed to it. Thus this question arose after the substitution of 14 for 12, i.e. after your statement of June 16th.

VETO POWER TO MUSLIM LEAGUE

In this statement no mention was made of this rule.

This very important change has been introduced almost casually and certainly without our consent. This again gives the power of veto or obstruction to the Muslim League in the Provisional Government.

DEADLOCKS A CERTAINTY

We have stated above our objections to your proposals of June 16th as well as to your answers to the question framed by Mr. Jinnah. These defects are grave and would ~~XXX~~ render the working of the provisional Government difficult and deadlocks a certainty. In the circumstances your proposals cannot fulfil the immediate requirements of the situation or further the cause we hold dear.

My Committee have, therefore, reluctantly come to the conclusion that they are unable to assist you in forming a Provisional Government as proposed in your statement of June 16th, 1946.

LONG-TERM PLAN ACCEPTED

With regard to the proposals made in the statement of May 16th, 1946 relating to the formation and functioning of the constitution making body, the

ne 27, 1946

~~making body~~, the Working Committee of the Congress passed a resolution on the 24th May, 1946 and conversations and correspondence have taken place between. Your Excellency and the Cabinet Mission on the one side and myself and some of my colleagues on the other. In these we have pointed out what in our opinion were the defects in the proposals. We also gave our interpretation of some of the provisions of the statement. While adhering to our views, we accept your proposals and are prepared to work them with a view to achieve our objective. We would add however, that the successful working of the constituent Assembly will largely depend on the formation of a satisfactory Provisional Government.

Yours ~~sincerely~~,

Sd/- A.K. Azad.

- (A.P.)

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Saturday
June 2

NO EUROPEAN VOTING

Azad On Constituent Assembly Election

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Congress President, returned to Calcutta by Air from Delhi yesterday(Friday). He is expecting to leave for Bombay on July 4, ~~expecting to leave for Bombay on July 4,~~ and his programme after A.I.C.C session there, has not been fixed and would depend on the situation he said. If necessary he may proceed to Delhi direct.

Approached by United Press immediately on his arrival home, he said that he had no fresh news to give. Replying to questions he stated that the Congress was firm that Europeans should neither stand as candidates nor vote in the Constituent Assembly elections ~~and he~~ ^{and he} hoped that the question would be solved to the satisfaction of the Congress.

He confined the report of the likelihood of his coming to the Constituent Assembly from the North-West Frontier Province.

MS

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Monday,
June 30, 1946

INTERIM GOVT. MUST HAVE STATUS OF
NATIONAL GOVT.

Maulana Azad Explains Congress Stand
Strong Opposition To Parity
Correspondence With Viceroy Released

Allahabad, June 2

Letter from Maulana Azad, the Congress President
to the Viceroy dated May 25, 1946.

Dear Lord Wavell,

Your Excellency will remember that the demand of the Congress from the very beginning of the present discussions regarding the Interim Government has been that there must be a legal and constitutional change in order to give it the status of a truly National Government. The Working Committee has felt that this is necessary in the interest of the peaceful settlement of the Indian problem. Without such status, the Interim Government would not be in a position to infuse in the Indian people ^a consciousness of freedom which is to-day essential. Both Lord Pethick Lawrence and you have, however, pointed out the difficulties in the way of offering such constitutional change, while at the same time assuring us that the Interim Government would have in fact if not in law, the status of a truly National Government. The Working Committee feel that after the British Government's declaration that the constituent assembly will be the final authority for framing the constitution and any constitution framed by it will be binding, the recognition of Indian independence is imminent. It is inevitable that the Interim Government which is to function during the period of the Constituent Assembly must reflect this recognition. In my last conversation with you, you stated that it ^{was} your intention to function as a constitutional head of the Government and that in practice the Interim Government would have the same powers as that of a Cabinet in the Dominions.

This however is a matter which is so important that

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it would not be ~~XXXX~~ fair either to you or to the Congress Working Committee to let it rest upon what transpired in informal conversations. Even without any change in the law there could be same formal understanding by which the Congress Working Committee may be assured that the Interim Government would in practice function like a Dominion Cabinet.

VICEROY'S REPLY

Reply from the Viceroy to the Congress President
dated 30-5-46.

May dear Maulana Sahib,

"I have received your letter of 25th May on the Interim Government. We have discussed this matter on several occasions and I recognise the importance that you and your party attach to a satisfactory definition of the powers of the Interim Government and appreciate your reasons for asking for such a definition. My difficulty is that the ~~in~~ most liberal intentions may be almost unrecognisable when they have to be ~~expressed~~ in a formal document.

"I am quite clear that I did not state to you that the Interim Government would have the same powers as a Dominion Cabinet. The whole constitutional position is entirely different. I said that I was sure that His Majesty's Government would treat the new Interim Government without the same close consultation and consideration as a Dominion Government.

"His Majesty's Government have already said that they will give to the Indian Government the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day to day administration of the country : and I need hardly assure you that it is my intention faithfully to carry out this undertaking.

"I am quite clear that the spirit in which the Government is worked will be of much greater importance ^{than} ~~than~~ any formal document and guarantee. I have no doubt that if you are prepared to trust me, we shall be able to cooperate in a manner which will give India a sense of freedom from external control and will prepare for complete freedom as soon

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the new constitution is made.

"I sincerely hope that the Congress will accept ~~th~~ these assurances and will have no further hesitation in joining to cooperate in the immense problems which confront us.

"In the matter of time table you will be aware that the All-India Muslim League Council is meeting on June 5 at which, we understand decisive conclusions are to be reached. I suggest, therefore, that if you summon your Working Committee to re^ssemble in Delhi on Friday the seventh, it may be possible for final decisions to be made by all parties on all outstanding questions early in the following week."

Sd/- Wavell.

VICEROY TO NEHRU

Letter from the Viceroy to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dated June 12, 1946.

Dear Pandit Nehru,

"I am anxious to have ^{an} ~~an~~ opportunity of consulting you together with Mr. Jinnah as to how best I can fill the various posts in the Interim Government. Could you come to see me for this purpose at 5 P.M. to-day ?

It is not my intention to discuss any question of principle such as "party" or otherwise, but to concentrate upon what I know to be our common objective, that is to get the best possible Interim Government drawn from the two major parties and some of the minorities and ^{to} ~~as~~ approach this decision by a consideration of what the portfolios should be and how each one can best be filled."

I am sending a similar letter to Mr. Jinnah.

Sd/- Wavell.

NEHRU'S REPLY

Reply from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the Viceroy dated June 12, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

"I am sorry for the slight delay in answering your letter of to-day's date. Your invitation to me to see you to-day at 5 P.M. in order to confer with you and Mr. Jinnah

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about the Interim Government placed me in a somewhat difficult position. I would gladly meet you at any time, but our official spokesman in regard to such matters ^{is} ~~in~~ naturally our President, Maulana Azad. He can speak and confer authoritatively, which I cannot do. It is, therefore, proper that he should be in charge on behalf of any authoritative conversation that might take place. But since you have asked ~~me~~ to come I shall do so. I hope, however, that you will appreciate my ~~XXXXX~~ position and that I can only talk without authority, which vests in our President and the Working Committee." -

Sd/- Jawaharlal Nehru.

TALKS ON INTERIM GOVT.

Letter from Maulana Azad, the Congress President to the Viceroy dated 13th June 1946 :-

Dear
~~Bar~~ Lord Wavell,

"Thank you for your letter of the 12th June, which I have just received, inquiring after my health, I have now more or less recovered.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has reported to my Committee and me the gist of the conversations between Your Excellency and him. My Committee regret that they are unable to accept your suggestions for the formation of the Provisional National Government. The tentative suggestions emphasise the principle of "Parity" to which we have been and are entirely opposed. In the composition of the Cabinet suggested by you, there is 'Parity' between the Hindus including the Scheduled Castes and the Muslim League, that is the number of Caste Hindus is actually less than the nominees of the Muslims League. The position thus ~~is~~ worse than it was in June 1945 at Simla where, according to your declaration, then, there was to be "Parity" between the Caste Hindus and Muslims, leaving additional seats for the Scheduled Caste Hindus. The Muslim seats then were not ~~xxxx~~ reserved for the Muslim League only but could include non-^LLeague Muslims. The present proposal thus puts the Hindus in a very unfair position and at the same

June, 30, 1946

time eliminates the non-League Muslims. My committee are not prepared to accept any such proposals.

Indeed as we have stated repeatedly we are opposed to Parity in any shape or form.

In addition to this "Parity" we are told that there should be any convention requiring that major communal issues should be decided by separate group voting. While we have accepted this principle for long term arrangements we did so as an effective substitute for other safeguards. In your present proposals, however, both "Parity" and this convention are suggested. This would make the working of the Provisional Government almost impossible and deadlock a certainty.

As I have often pointed out to you we are strongly of opinion that the Provisional Government should consist of ~~for~~ fifteen members. This is necessary to carry out the administration of the country efficiently, as well as to give adequate representation to the smaller minorities, we are anxious that the various minorities should have scope in such a Government. The work before the Provisional Government is likely to be much heavier and more exacting. In your proposals Communications include Railways, Transport, Post (Posts and Telegraph) and Air. It is ^{difficult for us to conceive how all} these can be joined together in one portfolio. This would be highly ^{un}desirable at any time. The industrial troubles and in the possibility of railway strikes this arrangement would be wholly wrong. We think, also that planning is an essential department for the Centre. We think, therefore, that the provisional Government must consist of fifteen members.

The suggested division of portfolios appears to us to be undesirable and unfair. My Committee should also like to point out that a Coalition Government in order to be successful must have some common outlook and programme for the time being. The manner of approach in forming such a Government has been such as to leave this out of consideration and my Commi-

... that ^{such} ~~any~~ a Coalition can

June 30, 1946

function successfully.

It was our intention to write to you about certain other matters also, but for reasons known to you our letter has been delayed. I shall write to you about these and other matters later. My purpose in writing to you now is to convey to you without any delay our reactions on the tentative proposals that you put forward to-day.

Sd/- Abul Kalam Azad."

POWERS OF INTERIM GOVT.

Letter from Maulana Azad Congress President to the Viceroy dated June 14th 1946.

Dear Lord Wavel,

In my letter to you sent yesterday I promised to send you another letter. I am now doing so.

On May 24th the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution which I conveyed to you. In this resolution we gave our reactions to the statement dated May 16, 1946, which the British Cabinet Delegation and you issued on behalf of the British Government. We pointed out ^{what} ~~that~~ were in our opinion some of the omissions and defects in that statement and we also gave ^{our} interpretation of some of its ~~provisions~~ ~~provisions~~ provisions. In a subsequent statement issued by you and the Cabinet Delgation our ~~viewpoint~~ viewpoint was not accepted.

You know, and we have repeatedly emphasised this, that our immediate objective has been and is the independence of India. We have to judge every thing by this standard. We suggested that even though no legal change might be made at this stage, independence in practice might be recognised. This has not been agreed to.

In your letter dated May 30, 1946, addressed to me, you explained what in your view the status and powers of Interim Government would ^{be} ~~be~~. This too falls short of what we, aim at. Yet the friendly tone of your letter and our desire to find some way out led us to accept your assurance in these matters. We came to the conclusion also that, unsatisfactory

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as were many of the provisions of your statement of May 16th we ~~would~~ try to work them according to our own intrep-
tation and with a view to acheive our objective.

OBJECTION TO GROUPING

You are ^{no} ~~to~~ doubt aware of the strong feeling of resentment which exist among large section of the people against some of the proposals in the statement notably the idea of grouping. The Frontier Province and Assam have expressed against any compulsory grouping. The Sikhs ~~have~~ felt hurt and isolated by these proposals and are oonsiderably agitated. Being a minority in the Punjab they become still more helpless as far as numbers go, in Section "B" . We appreciated all thes objections sepecially as we ourselves shared them. Nevertheless we hoped that according to our interpretation of the clauses relating to grouping which we still hold is correct interpreation for any other intrepreation would endanger the basic principle of provincial autonomy, we might be able to get over some of the ovious difficulties.

TWO ~~to~~ INSUPERABLE OBSTACLES

But two insuperable obstacles remained and we had hoped that you would be able to remove them. One of these related to the part that European ~~members~~ of the Provincial Assemblies might play in the election to the Constituent Assembly. We have no objection to Englishmen or Europeans as such, but we do have a strong objection to persons, who are foreigners and non-nationals and who claim to belong to the ruling race, participating in and influencing the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Cabinet Delegation's statement lays down clearly that the future constitution of India has to be decided by Indians. The basic principle of the statement of May ~~X~~ 16th was the election of a member of the Constituent Assembly to represent one million inhabitants. On this basis, the representatives ^{in Orissa and 180,000 Hindus} of 146,000 ~~XXXXXX~~ Muslims, and 58,000 Sikhs in the North West Frontier Provinces have not been given the right to elect any member to the Constituent Assembly.

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The European population of Bengal and Assam numbers only 21,000 but their representatives can return to the Constituent Assembly by their own vote seven out of 34 members, thus appropriating to them-selves the right to represent seven millions. They are returned to the Provincial Assemblies by a separate electorate of their own and have been given fantastic weightage. This representation of Europeans in the Constituent Assembly will be at the cost of non-Muslims, that is mainly Hindus who are already in a minority in Bengal. To make a minority suffer in this way is utterly wrong. Apart from the question of principle, it is a matter of the utmost importance in practice and may well affect the future both of Bengal and Assam. The Congress Working Committee attach the greatest importance to this. We would like to add that even if the Europeans themselves do not stand for election, but merely vote, the results will be equally bad. The Cabinet Delegation have informed us that beyond promising to use their persuasive powers they could not hold out any assurance to us that these European members would not exercise the right which we are advised, they do not possess under the statement of May 16th. But if the Delegation hold otherwise, as evidently they do, we cannot ~~contemplate~~ ^{contemplate} a legal fight for their exclusion at the threshold of the Constituent Assembly.

Therefore, a clear announcement is necessary that they will not take part as voters or candidates in the election to the Constituent Assembly. We cannot depend on grace or goodwill where rights are concerned.

QUESTION OF PARITY

Equally important, in our view, is the question of "Parity" in the proposed Provisional National Government. I have already written to you on this subject. This "Parity" or by whatever other name it may be called has been opposed by us throughout and we consider it a dangerous innovation which instead of working for harmony, will be a source of continuous

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conflict and trouble. It may well poison our future as other separatist steps in the past have poisoned our public life. We are told that this is a temporary provision and need not be treated as a precedent, but no such assurance can prevent an evil step from having evil consequences. We are convinced that even the immediate results of any such provision will be harmful.

If the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ position about the European vote and "Parity" remains, my Committee are reluctantly compelled to inform you that they will not be able to assist you in the ^{difficult} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ task ahead.

The talk we had with you to-day has not made any substantial difference to the fundamental position. We have noted that according to your new suggestions the proposed woman member might be replaced by a Hindu, thus increasing the Hindu members including Scheduled Caste representatives to six. We would be sorry not to have a woman^a member, but apart from this, the new proposal maintains the old Simla (1945) formula of parity between Caste Hindus and Muslims, ~~but we~~ ~~now~~ with this important qualification that ~~now~~ now Muslims are supposed to mean members of Muslim League. We are unable to agree to this proposal and we are still convinced that the Provisional Government must consist of fifteen members and that there should be no kind of parity in the selections.

Sd/- A.K. Azad.

VICEROY TO AZAD

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President dated 15th June 1946 :-

My dear Moulana Sahib,

I have received your letter of June 14. I will reply to it in detail in the course of to-day. Meanwhile, I must assume from the last paragraph of your letter that my attempt to negotiate an agreement between the two major parties on the composition of the Interim Government

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has failed.

The Cabinet Delegation and I have, therefore, decided to issue to-morrow a statement on the action we take, and we will let you have a copy of proposed to this before publication.

Sd/- Wavell.

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President dated 15th June 1946.

My dear Maulana Sahib,

I have received your letter of 14th June. You deal with matters on which we have already had much discussion.

We are doing everything possible to further the independence of India. As we have already pointed out, however there must first be a new constitution drawn up by the people of India.

The Delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would, however, point out that the statement of 16th May does not make grouping compulsory. It leaves the decision to the elected representatives of the provinces concerned sitting together in sections.

The only provision which is made is that the representatives of certain provinces should meet in sections so that they can decide whether or not they wish to form groups. Even when this has been done the individual provinces are still to have the liberty to ^{opt} out of the group if they ^{decide} so ~~decide~~.

I recognise the ~~XXXXXX~~ difficulty about the Europeans who through not fault of their own find themselves in a difficult position. I still hope that a satisfactory solution of the problem will be found.

Our discussions in regard to the Interim Government have been on the basis of political parties and not communities. I understand that this is regarded as preferable now. As it was at the first Simla Conference, in the proposed Interim Government of myself and thirteen others, there will be six congress-

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men and ~~the~~ five Muslims' Leaguers. I do not see how this can be called parity. Nor is there parity between Hindus and Muslims, there being six Hindus to five Muslims.

Even at this last moment, I still hope that the Congress will now accept the statement and consent to join the Interim Government.

Sd/- Wavell.

EUROPEAN VOTING OPPOSED

Letter from Maulana Azad, the Congress President, to the Viceroy, dated June 16, 1946 :-

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have received your two letters of June 15th. I note what you say about grouping. We abide by our interpretation of it.

As regards Europeans we are clear ^{that} ~~the~~ even on a legal interpretation of the statement of May 16th apart from other consideration, they have not the right to participate in the elections to the ~~XXXXXX~~ Constituent Assembly. I am glad to expect a satisfactory solution of the problem.

QUESTION OF PARITY

We have endeavoured in our letter and in the course of our talks to state clearly what our position is in regard to any kind of parity. You will remember that parity was mentioned and considered as the first Simla Conference. That parity was exactly same as is now suggested by you, that is parity between caste Hindus and Muslims.

Owing to the stress of war and other conditions then existing we were prepared to accept this only for that occasion. It was not to be used ~~as a~~ precedent. Moreover, this was subject to inclusion of at least one Nationalist Muslim. Now conditions have entirely changed and we have to consider the question in another context. That is approaching independence and Constituent Assembly. As we have written to you in the context and in present circumstances we consider this ~~XXXXXX~~ kind of parity unfair and likely to lead to difficulties

e 30, 1946

The whole scheme proposed by you in the statement of May 16 is based on absence of weightage and yet, in the proposed Provisional Government there is this weightage, in addition to other far-reaching communal safeguards.

We have tried our utmost to arrive at a satisfactory settlement and shall not despair of it. But such a settlement in order to be enduring must be based on strong foundations. So far as the statement of May 16th is concerned our main difficulty, as we wrote to you, was European vote, then this difficulty also goes.

The second and remaining difficulty relates to the proposals for the Provisional Government which have to be considered together with the statement. The two cannot be separated. These proposals have thus far been unacceptable to us, but if a satisfactory settlement in regard to them is arrived at, we would be in a position to shoulder the burden.

Sd/- Abul Kalam Azad.

Y
VICEROY'S LETTER ACCOMPANYING NEW PROPOSAL

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President dated 16th June, 1946.

Dear Maulana Sahib,

I send herewith a copy of the statement which as indicated in the letter I sent you yesterday, will be released at 4 P.M. this evening.

As the statement shows, the Cabinet Ministers and I are fully aware of the difficulties that have prevented an agreement on the composition of the Interim Government. We are unwilling to abandon our hope of a working partnership between the two major parties and representatives of the minorities.

We have therefore done our best to arrive at a practicable arrangement taking into consideration the various conflicting claims and the need for obtaining a Government of capable and representative administrators. We hope that the parties will now take their share in the administration of

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of the country on the basis set out in our new statement. We are sure we can rely on you and your Working Committee to look to the wider issues and to ^{the} be urgent needs of the country as a whole, and to consider this proposal in a spirit of accommodation.

Sd/- Wavell.

(Enclosed - Statement by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy, dated 16th June).

CONGRESS DECISION DEFERRED

Letter from the Congress President to the Viceroy dated 18th June 1946.

Dear Lord Wavell,

I promised to write to you this evening in case my Committee had come to any decisions. The Committee met this afternoon and sat for many hours. In the absence of our colleague, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who is due to arrive ~~to-morrow~~ ^{tomorrow}, we decided to adjourn till to-morrow. I am, therefore, not in a position this evening to convey to you any decision. I shall communicate with you as soon as my Committee arrives at any conclusion.

Sd/- Abul Kalam Azad.

VICEROY URGES EARLY DECISIONS

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President, dated June 20, 1946.

Dear Maulana Sahib,

You will, I am sure appreciate that the members of the Cabinet Mission have a great deal of urgent work awaiting them in England and are not in a position to prolong their stay in the country indefinitely. I would therefore ask your Working Committee to let us have a final answer as soon as possible to the proposals made in our statement on June 16.

I understand that you have summoned back the members of the ~~XXXXXX~~ Committee who had left Delhi and in these circumstances we would ask you to let us have your answer not later than Sunday, June 23.

Sd/- Wavell.

June 30, 1946

JINNAH'S NEW OBJECTION

Letter from the Congress President to the
Viceroy dated 21st June, 1946.

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have your Excellency's letter of 20th June, 1946. I appreciate your anxiety to come to an early decision regarding the formation of an Interim Government and I can assure you that my Working Committee fully share your anxiety. A new difficulty, in addition to the old ones, has however been created by the publication in the press of the alleged ^{contents} ~~contains~~ of Mr. Jinnah's letter to you in which he ^{raises} ~~releases~~ objection to the Congress nominations in the Interim Cabinet. It will be of great assistance to the Working Committee in coming to a decision if they could have copies of these alleged letters and your reply as they deal with vital matters which we have to consider.

Sd/- Abul Kalam Azad.

POINTS FROM JINNAH'S LETTER

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President
dated 21st June 1946:-

Dear Maulana Azad,

I thank you for your letter of to-day. Mr. Jinnah in his letter to me of 19th June, put to me the following questions: (1) Whether the proposals contained in the statement for setting up of an Interim Government are now final or whether they are still open to any further change of modification at the instance of any of the parties or persons concerned.

2. Whether the total number of fourteen members of the Government ^{as} ~~at~~ proposed in the statement would remain unchanged during the interim period.

3. If any person or persons invited as representatives of the four minorities viz. the Scheduled Castes, the Sikh, the Indian Christians and the Parsis, is or ^{are} ~~is~~ unable to accept the invitation to join the Interim Government for personal or other reasons how will the vacancy or vacancies thus created

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be filled ~~by the~~ Viceroy; and whether in filling up the vacancy or vacancies the leader of the Muslim League will be consulted and his consent obtained.

4 (a) Whether during the Interim period for which the Coalition Government is being set up, the proportion of members of the Government community-wise, as provided in the proposals, will be maintained.

(b) Whether the present representation given to four minorities, viz, the Scheduled Castes, the Sikhs, the Indian Christians and the Parsis will be adhered to without any change or modification and (5) in view of the substitution of 14 now proposed for the original of 12 and the change made in the original formula, whether there will be ~~a~~provision, in order to safeguard Muslim interests, that the Executive Council shall not take any decision on any major communal issue if the **majority** of the Muslim members are opposed to it."

VICEROY'S REPLY

The operative part of my reply dated the 20th June was as follows :

"The intention in the statement of June 16, was that the discussion of portfolios ^{with} ~~XXXXX~~ leaders of the two main parties should follow the acceptance by both parties of the scheme. This intention still holds since until the names are known ^{it is difficult to decide on the distribution of portfolios.}

On the points which you desire to be made dear in connection with the Government to be formed under our statement of June 16, I give you the following reply after consultation with the Delegation.

I. Until I have received acceptances from those invited to take office in the Interim Government the names in the statement cannot be regarded as final. But no change in the principle will ^{be} made in the statement without the consent of the two major parties.

June 30, 1946

2. No change in the number of 14 members of the Interim Government will be made without the agreement of the two major parties.
3. If any vacancy occurs among the seats at present allotted to representatives of minorities I shall naturally consult the both the main parties before filling it.
- 4 (a) and (b) the proportion of members by communities will not be changed without the agreement of the two major parties.
5. No decision on a major communal issue could be taken by the Interim Government if the majority of either of the main parties were opposed to it. ~~XX~~ I pointed this out to the Congress President and he agreed that the Congress appreciated this point."

Sd/- Wavell.

QUESTION OF INCLUDING CONGRESS MUSLIM

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President dated 22nd June 1946 :-

My dear Maulana Sahib,

I understand from press reports that there is a strong feeling in Congress circles that the party should insist on their right to include a Muslim of their own choice among the representatives of the Congress in the Indian Government.

For reasons of which you are already aware it is not possible for the Cabinet Mission or myself to accept this request, but I would draw your attention to paragraph 5 of the statement of the 16th June, which reads as follows :-

"The above composition of the Interim Government/^{is}~~in~~ no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government."

In the light of this assurance that no precedent is established we appeal to the Congress not to press their demand but to take part in the strong Interim Government which the country so urgently needs.

Sd/-Wavell.

- (A.P.)

Sunday, July 7, 1946.

NEW A.I.C.C. DISCUSSES
MISSION'S PROPOSALS

Nehru Occupies Presidential Chair

AZAD EXPLAINS WHY WORKING COMMITTEE
ACCEPTED LONG-TERM PLAN

BOMBAY, July 6.

AZAD'S SPEECH

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President in his valedictory speech said, "We have met here after six years. No elections to the All-India Congress Committee could be held till now owing to the war and the abnormal conditions created by the war. These six years have been years of profound importance in our history as they mark far-reaching changes in the international situation and our own struggle for our national independence. We are on the thresh-hold of our freedom. Our freedom is coming, not because of International changes but because of the revolution that has taken place in our own country resulting in great national awakening.

"The new All-India Congress Committee which has just assembled contains new blood and fresh minds. I am glad to welcome the new members as new blood always gives fresh vigour and strength. This meeting of the new All-India Congress Committee should have been held along with the plenary session of the Congress, but owing to abnormal conditions we have been unable to hold the annual session. Now that a new All-India Congress Committee has been elected I have decided to hand over the reins of office of the Congress President to Pandit Jawarlal Nehru to allow the work of the Congress to be carried on uninterrupted, though the annual session itself may not be held for sometime.

"When I took charge of the office of the Congress President at the Ramgarh Congress six years ago, we were struggling for our freedom. But to-day when I lay down the reins of the office, I am happy to find that the question is no longer one of fighting for our freedom, as we are already on the threshold of freedom, but of working out the freedom that is coming. Only one

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further step is required for us to reach our goal."

REPLY TO CRITICISM

The Congress President then referred to the criticism that the Working Committee had not consulted the All-India Congress Committee earlier in connection with the constitutional negotiations and said that the criticism was wrong for the reason that as soon as definite conclusions were reached the Working Committee lost no time in summoning the All-India Congress Committee to get its stamp of approval on the decisions taken by the Working Committee.

Maulana Azad urged the Committee to consider the results of the Working Committee's negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission dispassionately and see if the Working Committee had not discharged its responsibilities in the best interests of the country.

MAULANA AZAD'S SPEECH

... Maulana Abul Kalam Azad moved the Working Committee's resolution seeking ratification of the Delhi Resolution passed on June 26.

... Commending the resolution to the house for its acceptance the Maulana Sahab said, "The way the discussion on the Working Committee's resolution has been going on in the country makes me reel that the people seem to have forgotten the question that the Working Committee was faced with. The Committee had either to accept or reject certain proposals placed before it. It had to be guided by what the Congress had been demanding all these years. The Congress had demanded that India must have the right to chalk out her own future and frame her own constitution. But circumstances had now forced the British Government to agree to India's fundamental demand of summoning a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing a constitution for a free and independent India.

"The Cabinet Mission's ...

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proposal contained in the State Paper issued on May 16 gave us this right to summon a Constituent Assembly to frame our own constitution. This is what we have been demanding all these years. What will be our position, if we refuse that offer.

"If we refused the offer, then there would be no meaning to our demands. The things that we have been asking for years has been accepted and we have now to work our own way.' Therefore, the Committee had no choice. It had to accept the offer so long as the Committee felt convinced that it would lead the country to the end the Congress had before it.

IMPLICATIONS OF PLAN

"The plan envisaged by the Cabinet Mission in their White Paper of May 16, consists of two aspects, political and communal. As far as the political implications of the proposals are concerned the proposals make it clear that the Constituent Assembly will have the fullest rights to frame a constitution for a free and independent India and such a constitution will be accepted by the British Government.

"We have been given the freedom to decide whether we wish to remain within the British Empire or be completely independent. It is for us to decide this vital question and the British Government does not wish to dictate to us in this respect as they have hitherto been doing.

"In my first interview with the Cabinet Mission, I made it absolutely clear to the Delegation that the Constituent Assembly we wished to summon should have unfettered freedom to frame a constitution for a free and independent India. The British ^{Government} ~~Government~~ has accepted this demand and has made it clear that the freedom of India is not under question and it has been granted without any question. Why then should we raise doubt in the face of such unequivocal declarations by the British Government ?

'The Cabinet Mission's proposals also have once and for

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all times cleared all doubts about the question of the division of India. These proposals have made it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that India shall remain undivided, a single unit with a strong Central Government composed of federating units.

MAIN DEMANDS ACCEPTED

"Our main demands having thus been accepted by the Cabinet Delegation you will agree the Working Committee had to accept the proposals after pointing out the defects in them. This ^{is} what the Working Committee has done by its resolution of June 26. My answer to those critics who say that we should not have accepted this proposals is that if we rejected this proposal now, it may not be possible at a later date in the future to secure a proposal acceptable to us.

" For sometime now the Congress had been convinced that a completely unitary form of Central Government was unsuited for India as it is impracticable. The Congress had also felt convinced that division of India as demanded by the Muslim League would prove disastrous to the country. The Congress had therefore decided to pursue a middle course. That is the reason the Congress recommended a federal ^{form} ~~form~~ of Centre with maximum autonomy to the federating units including residuary powers. This helps to keep India undivided, at the same time ensuring utmost autonomy to the units to develop themselves individually and freely to the maximum extent.

UNITED CENTRE

" We placed this proposal before the Cabinet Mission which accepted this proposal in principle and produced a scheme with a united Centre with limited powers such as controlling Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications and Finance to the extent needed to maintain the stability of the Union Centre.

"The Constituent Assembly could now find ways and means of strengthening the Union Centre by conceding to the Centre sufficient powers to levy enough finances to support itself and maintain an efficient defence force to protect the country

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from external aggression and internal turmoil.

" The only new feature of the Cabinet Mission's proposals to which the Congress had not agreed fully was the one relating to grouping. The Working Committee has therefore made it clear that there should be no compulsion in the matter of grouping. The province should be free to decide whether they wish to join a particular group or not. We are confident that the interpretation we have put on the grouping clause is the correct interpretation.

" The Congress Working Committee has made it clear that it cannot agree to the Europeans of Bengal and Assam participating in the framing of the constitution either by being members of the Constituent Assembly or participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly by voting. If the Europeans eventually decide to exercise their so-called right of voting in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, then the Congress will have to reconsider its decision.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in conclusion welcomed the decision of Bengal Europeans not to exercise their right to vote and hoped that Assam Europeans also would do likewise.

Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel seconding the resolution said that the resolution covered the two statements by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy of May 16 and June 16. The Working Committee had accepted the Mission's proposals contained in their statement of May 16 but rejected the Provisional Government proposal contained in their statement of June 16.

Making it clear that the resolution just moved by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad could not be amended in any manner Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel said, "We place this resolution before the House for ratification. Either you accept it or reject it in toto."

"Four parties, the Cabinet Mission, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Indian Princes have accepted the constitutional plan envisaged in the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission on May 16. All vital details connected with negotiations have been fully published. You are aware the Muslim League, first accepted the May 16 statement of the Cabinet mission. We deferred our

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decision until the full picture was available to us, namely of the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Provisional Government. The Interim Government plan was published in the June 16 statement of the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy. We decided to reject this proposal as it did not accord with our demands. We however decided to accept the Constituent Assembly scheme contained in the May 16 statement. We have made it clear to the Cabinet Mission that the proposed Constituent Assembly will not prove a success if a responsible representative Provisional Government at the Centre is not established soon. They have made ^{it} clear that the Care-taker Government will be there only for a few days."

GROUPING OF PROVINCES

"Consistent with the existing circumstances we have secured the widest franchise possible for the election to the Constituent Assembly. The most dangerous proposal in the Constituent Assembly scheme is the one relating to grouping. Our interpretation of the relevant ~~xxx~~ paragraph in the State Paper is that the provinces are free to decide at the initial stage whether they wish to join a particular group in which they have been placed. No province can be compelled to join any group against its own wishes.

"The difficulty about Europeans participating in the voting to the Constituent Assembly election has been practically overcome. We have thus secured a Constituent Assembly almost on the lines we have demanded all these years. Furthermore under the proposed scheme the transfer of power from British to Indian hands will be smooth and peaceful. It is therefore, our conviction that we should take advantage of the scheme and not plunge the country in a struggle.

"At the very commencement of our negotiations with the Cabinet Delegation we made it clear to them that we could talk to them only on the basis of a free and independent India. The British Cabinet Mission accepted this and made it clear

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that their acceptance of our demand was without any reservation. In the face of such assurance it is difficult for us not to believe them.

"We have also made sure that there shall be one undivided India with one Central Government. What the shape of that Central Government will be, is a matter for the Constituent Assembly to decide. The Muslim League sees germs of Pakistan in the scheme. We see a United India. It is for the Constituent Assembly to decide who is right. - (A.P.)

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A.I.C.C. RATIFIES DELHI RESOLUTION

2-DAY SESSION IN BOMBAY ENDS

... AZAD'S REPLY TO CRITICISMS

Bombay, July 7.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad dealt with the various criticisms made against the resolution by those who opposed the resolution. He said many of the opposition speakers had stated that the British Government were responsible for sponsoring the Constituent Assembly. This was utterly wrong. "No one can say," declared the Maulana, "that the British Government sent the Cabinet Mission to India to offer us the Constituent Assembly as a free gift. We have secured the Constituent Assembly as a result of our struggle and sacrifices during the past fifty years. The final struggle that was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942 did, of course, hasten the pace of our freedom movement.

"The British people and their Labour Government have realised that we the people of India are determined to have our freedom and nothing on earth can prevent us from achieving our goal. The British Government had, therefore, to make up their mind whether they should transfer power peacefully and quit or allow us to take it forcefully. They have chosen the wiser course.

"I am unable to agree with those who say that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall be weakening the Congress organisation. Why should anyone think that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall weaken ourselves. Whatever difficulties may stand in our way we will overcome them as we are determined to reach our final goal.

"We will not in any event sacrifice any of our fundamental principles. If ~~any~~ unfortunately any insuperable difficulties crop up in direct conflict with our fundamental principles, we shall not hesitate to kill the Constituent Assembly.

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DISCARD FEAR COMPLEX

"Opposition speakers have exhibited a fear complex- vague fear of the unknown. I ask if there is any problem which has no difficulties inherent in it. It is no use approaching any problem with a fear complex. If we do this we shall not be able to achieve anything at all.

"In the proposed Constituent Assembly the Congress will have a definite majority and in spite of this we have fears as to how we are going to settle the fate of the country. We have won our struggle for freedom through sheer sacrifices and suffering and I will ask you now not to falter and fritter away the fruits of victory by adopting a gloomy outlook and fear complex.

Statesmanship demands that we should be practical in our approach to problems. We must utilise opportunities as they present themselves to further our own ends. Sometimes circumstances may be such that we may have to decide on a struggle. At other times it may be that the door to our goal may be opened through negotiations and in such a situation it is our duty to enter into negotiations and enter through the doorway that is open.

"The Congress has never departed from its fundamental principle or direct action. We have always sworn by it. We made it clear to the British Government even before the Cabinet Mission was sent to India that they ^{should} ~~should~~ either give us our freedom or face a struggle. We were then told that we were indulging in threats. We made it clear that it was wrong of the British Government to regard it as mere threat. Against this background we started the Delhi negotiations.

"It has been argued that the Central Government will not be a strong one unless it has within its fold economic relations and finance. These questions will be settled by the Constituent Assembly. I do agree that the Central Government can never be effective unless it has the means to support itself. The Congress will never tolerate a weak Centre.

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NOT A TRAP

I want to make it clear that those who say that the Constituent Assembly is a trap are making a great mistake. There is no question of the Constituent Assembly being a trap. We asked for a Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free and independent India and the Cabinet Mission agreed to our demand. How then can anyone call it a trap ?

I want to emphasise that by accepting the Constituent Assembly proposal we shall lay at rest one of the longest standing communal problems. The Muslim League has been demanding all these years the division of India into Hindustan and Pakistan and two separate Constituent Assemblies to draw up separate constitution. Both these things have been abandoned by the Muslim League by its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals of May 16. The result of this proposal is that there shall be one united India and one Constituent Assembly with one Central Government.

I ask if this is not a great achievement. If you reject the Constituent Assembly as the opposition wants you to do, I ask if we shall not be adding to our problems and quarrels. Victory has come into our hands and ^{please} ~~place~~, do not turn it into a defeat (cheers). The door to the Constituent Assembly is open to enable us to draw up our own constitution. Please enter it and complete our task of framing our own constitution (applause). - (A.P.) .

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